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How did they get there? : the career development of senior women academic officers in New England community colleges.

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HOW DID THEY GET THERE? THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR WOMEN ACADEMIC OFFICERS IN NEW ENGLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A Dissertation Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

HOW DID THEY GET THERE? THE CAREER

DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR WOMEN ACADEMIC OFFICERS

IN NEW ENGLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Few studies exist dealing with the career development of women to senior academic officers positions in higher education. As more women pursue these senior level administrative careers, there arises a need to better understand how they develop them. What is this phenomenon of career development? How do women develop careers in hierarchical organizations? How do traditional gender-roles influence career choice?

The review of the literature comprises three sections: an exploration of the literature on the organizational structure of higher education and the career paths taken to senior academic administrative positions; an examination of the career development literature; and a review of the literature on the influence of role models and mentors on occupational choice.

The methodology for this study was Naturalistic Inquiry. In Naturalistic Inquiry, a priori theory is used as guiding theory to help the researcher generate questions and search for patterns. To gain an understanding of the career development of the women chosen for this study, research questions focused on above questions. Six women participated in in-depth interviews. The analyses and synthesis of the data into assertions is presented in case studies.

Many common themes as well as differences emerged from the data. These women labored to gain a depth of knowledge and breadth of experience in higher education administration. Much of their inclination to hard work was grounded in their desire to serve; they are committed to community college education. The dominant culture which places women in the private domain and men in the public domain significantly influenced the career lives of some of these women. Mentors were key to helping these achievers gain self-confidence and choose a path up the academic administrative career ladder. Finding the right fit, and positioning oneself were instrumental to developing a career in a hierarchical institution. Finally, obtaining the doctorate, while simultaneously growing intellectually and professionally, was also key to success.

This study increases our knowledge on women's career development in the community colleges. Not every woman who pursues a career as a senior academic officer will act as these women. However, what we have learned can be applied to similar contexts.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The literature on women in higher education administration has increased dramatically over the last decade. Much of the literature has focused on two issues. Researchers have stressed why it is important to move more women into senior level positions. As our society becomes more diverse and more women pursue educational opportunities, there arises a need to increase the numbers of women in senior level administrative positions. The women who teach, learn, and work at colleges and universities want role models and mentors which represent their gender.

Others have chronicled the increased numbers, albeit small, of those who have achieved senior level positions and evidenced how the hierarchical structure of institutions prevents women from achieving senior positions. Their studies indicate that colleges and universities have rather flat hierarchies, with many administrative positions in the middle and few administrative positions at the top. Adrian Tinsley (1983) described this structure as a pyramid. Tinsley and others showed that men dominate the top of the pyramid. In the mid-1970s, only five percent of the presidents and only 23% of the senior-level administrators at all colleges and universities were women (Chamberlain, 1991). In a 1983 study of senior administrators in four-year degree granting institutions, Moore found that only 9.4% of the presidents, 13.6% of the provosts, and 13.8% of the academic deans were women. In a similar 1985 study

at community colleges, Moore, Twombley, and Martorana (1985) found that of the 1512 administrators who responded to their survey, only 3.1% of the presidents and less than 16% of the senior academic officers were female. By 1992 studies which included all two-year and four-year colleges and universities showed an increase to 12% for presidents and 30.2% for senior-level administrators (Chamberlain, 1991; Touchton, Shavlik & Davis, 1993).

The middle level is also dominated by men. However, there are many women in middle management positions doing "women's work" (Tinsley, 1985, p. 6). The 1985-86 Administrative Compensation Survey documented six middle management position in which the number of women exceeded the number of men: directors of affirmative action, news bureau, alumni affairs, information service, publications, and student health services. The largest number of women serve as middle managers in positions such as registrar or as directors in student financial services, student health services, library services, bookstore, student placement, and student affairs (Chamberlain, 1991). Further research has shown that the bottom of the pyramid, staff positions, continues to be dominated by women (Tinsley, 1984; Vaughn, 1994). Overall, women have made significant gains into middle management positions but still remain underrepresented at the senior level.

Few studies exist which deal with the career development of women into senior positions. Since career systems reflect the organizations they serve, it becomes important to understand how careers are developed in a hierarchical organization. By the nature of the structure, there is more mobility and opportunities for lateral career

change in the middle while upward mobility to senior level positions is restricted (Twombley, 1990). It is also commonly believed that an individual's career unfolds within an organization (Moore, 1984; Tinsley, 1984). But, the unique interconnectedness of higher education institutions suggest that positions and career changes are not necessarily made within a single college, instead they span several institutions (Twombley, 1990). Careers are developed inter-institutionally and intra-institutionally. Reflecting on the difficulty in developing a career in this myriad of institutions and in this hierarchical structure, Kathryn M. Moore, in her 1984 Presidential Address to the Association for the Study of Higher Education, asserted: "The people who launch themselves into careers in administration often do not know how to maneuver. They sometimes do not know where they want to go. They may not even realize that they are part of a large interconnected network, and they often feel victimized by the very process in which they are engaged" (p. 2). Accepting the hierarchical structure and this myriad of institutions from which to develop a career, and realizing the few numbers of women in senior positions, it becomes important to understand the career development of women who have successfully maneuvered to the top.

Considerable literature has been written about career development from both an organizational and individual perspective. Career development is described as the process of pursuing and acquiring positions which represent some type of progress toward success; ie., moving up the hierarchy, procuring an increase in salary, gaining increased recognition and respect from one's own colleagues, or receiving the

opportunity to pursue one's own interests or special projects (Gutek & Larwood, 1987). The literature from the individual perspective revolves around theories to explain occupational choice (Ginzberg, Ginzberg, Axelrad & Herma, 1951; Holland, 1985; Mitchell & Krumbolz, 1985). Situated in this literature is significant research on how women make career choices and how traditional gender roles influence the choices made (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Fassinger, 1985; Gutek & Larwood, 1987).

The structure of the hierarchy in institutions of higher education and the career paths of those who fill the positions within that hierarchy is a significant issue addressed in the literature from the organizational perspective. The metaphor of a ladder is used to describe the path taken to senior level positions; for each top position, there is a series of more or less standard positions one must occupy. In spite of the metaphor, however, research has shown that career paths are in fact relatively unstructured, there are many variations and many starting positions on the ladder (Moore, Salimbene, Marlier & Bragg, 1983; Twombley, 1990). Nonetheless, in general, the learning which occurs in previous experiences prepares individuals to assume positions higher up the administrative ladder (Twombley, 1990; Touchton et al., 1993).

Obviously the structure of the hierarchy influences career choice and career development in higher education, but, the hiring practices of institutions also shape administrative careers. Socolow (1978), in a study based on job postings found in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, found that jobs at senior administrative levels were filled only 24% of the time by individuals who applied directly for a position without

any prior connections to the institution. Sagaria (1986), in a study on the hiring of academic deans, found that personal contacts were of central importance in attaining a deanship. She found that nearly one third of the deans in the study were nominated for their current position. Half of the study participants reported learning of the vacancy through personal contacts not on the search committee and another quarter were informed of the vacancy by a member of the search committee. Juxtaposed against these findings are the results of Moore, Twombley, and Martorana's (1985) study of academic leaders at community colleges. They found that nearly half of all academic administrators in their study became candidates for their positions by applying directly to an advertised vacancy. Men (40.5%) were more likely than women (35.7%) to have indicated that personal contacts were by far the single most important resource for finding out about vacancies (Twombley & Moore, 1987). Therefore, women at community colleges tend to develop their career to senior positions from a grass-roots effort; they apply for vacant positions more often then they are nominated for, or promoted to, a position.

Thus, as more and more women pursue senior level administrative careers in higher education administration there needs to be an understanding of how an aspiring professional develops a career as an administrator. What is this phenomena career development? How do women develop careers in hierarchical organizations? How to traditional gender-roles influence career choice?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to promote a fuller understanding of the career development processes among women who choose and achieve senior academic administrative positions in two-year, public community and technical colleges. Women at public community colleges were chosen for three reasons. First, community colleges serve more diverse populations than four-year colleges and universities; a greater percentage of women and minorities begin their academic careers at the community colleges (Brint & Karabel, 1989). Yet given the large numbers of female students and female employees at community colleges, only 12% of all community college presidents are women and fewer than 22% of all senior academic officers are women (Vaughn, 1994). Second, I am motivated to learn more about how women in community colleges secure a good position and move up the organizational ladder. The literature indicates that men at the community colleges and men and women at the four-year institutions are more likely to be nominated or recruited for their position. On the other hand, women appear to achieve senior academic administrative positions at community colleges through direct application. Lastly, as a researcher interested in studying women's careers in two-year public institutions and as a professional seeking a position as a senior academic officer in a community college, I am distressed by the low numbers of women in these positions and desire to understand those who have achieved senior positions.

Therefore, it is my goal to take us beyond an inquiry into why so few have made it and the barriers which prevent women from achieving, into a better

understanding of those who have made it. What is so special about these exemplary women who have achieved success in a traditionally male domain? What insights can be gained from their experiences? How does the path taken shape the career? It is my hope that this study will shed some fresh light on avenues of mobility and patterns of achievement. In the process, it is my intention that the study will also bring us to a better understanding of how traditional gender-based social roles influence career choice and aspirations.

This study will be of particular interest to all women professionals embarking upon a career in higher education. One of the goals of this scholarship is to assist emerging professionals make career choices through reading case histories. At the same time, it is not meant to be a how-to guide. Rather, the aim is to provide a framework for career development within which individuals can explore their own career options.

Significance of the Study

An extensive literature search was conducted indicating that there is a growing body of research on both career development and on career paths and patterns in academe. Limited research exists on the career advancement of women who achieve senior officer positions. Most prior studies can be characterized by quantitative analysis, focusing on the inadequate numbers of women in higher education and how the hierarchical structure impedes their career development. There are very few

studies which explore career development in higher education from the personal perspective and even fewer which target women in community colleges.

Several doctoral students have been interested in the phenomena of women's career development to senior positions. In her dissertation, Rahat Idrees (1989) focused on the career development of women to middle-management positions in four-year public and private institutions. Vicki Mistr (1991) concentrated on the career and leadership development of a senior level academic administrator at a four-year college. Judy Brusich (1990) studied the salient factors in career development of senior administrators in four-year colleges and universities. And Charmian Sperling (1994) studied the leadership development of community college presidents. These works are representative of the types of studies that have focused on women's careers and women in community colleges. Despite this research, however, there has not been a study to date which specifically targets the career development of women to senior academic officer positions in community colleges. This study will be an important contribution to the scholarship about women. If colleges are seriously committed to moving more women into presidencies and senior academic positions, obtaining an understanding of how these women developed their careers will provide insight into how to assist more women achieve leadership positions.

Context of the Study

The culture and nature of community colleges differ from traditional four-year institutions. Established originally to handle the burden of growing student populations

by offering the first two years of baccalaureate education, today's community colleges have broader missions and purposes (Cohen & Brawer, 1991). Continuing to offer the traditional transfer preparation programs while including vocational-technical education, continuing education, developmental education, and community service programs makes community colleges more diverse than most traditional four-year colleges and universities.

As mandated by state legislation, public community colleges have open door admissions policies. They provide access to higher education for many Americans who have not been well served by traditional higher education: those who are from ethnic minorities often constrained from participating; who could not afford the tuition; who had inadequate background in high school and were in need of developmental training; who could not take the time to attend college on a full-time basis; who by the nature of their disability, could not attend classes on a traditional campus; or those who were denied access for many other reasons. As Cohen and Brawer noted: "Of all the higher education institutions, the community colleges contributed most to opening the system" (1991, p. 12). Over 4 million students are enrolled in community colleges and the majority of all degree-credit students enter the system of higher education through the community college (Brint & Karabel, 1989).

In many ways, community colleges are a microcosm of today's diverse society (Vaughn, 1994). The open door policies make community colleges more accessible to many of society's marginalized peoples. The student body is more diverse than at four-year colleges and most community colleges have embraced a more diverse faculty,

staff, and administration. As Carolyn Desjardins, Executive Director of the National Institute for Leadership Development reflected: "It is [the community college] the college of the people" (in Kastberg & Miller, in press). It is the institutional culture and diversity of peoples within these institutions which makes studying the careers of women in community colleges so interesting.

Research Questions

Insights forming the basis for new theory can come from existing theory, personal experience, one's imagination and the experience of others (Merriam, 1988). In Naturalistic Inquiry, the methodology chosen for this study, a priori theory is used as guiding theory to help the researcher generate questions and search for patterns. By becoming familiar with the literature on career development, career paths and patterns, and careers in community colleges, I was able to determine the research questions, the context of the study, and the participants. To gain an understanding of the career development of these women, research questions focused on four specific areas:

1. How have these senior women academic officers in community colleges approached career decision making?
2. Who or what influenced these women in their decision-making processes?
3. What are the characteristics of these achievers?
4. How did traditional gender-based social roles influence their career aspirations and career choices?

A qualitative method was chosen for this study because numbers obtained by quantitative methods cannot be used to accurately describe experience. The intent of qualitative research is to discover important questions, processes, and relationships (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Naturalistic Inquiry is a qualitative method based in ethnography and phenomenology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Skirtic, 1985). The qualitative methods of Naturalistic Inquiry and assumptions of the emergent paradigm are better suited for this study than quantitative methods. The techniques of Naturalistic Inquiry, in-depth interviewing, document analysis, and observation, lead to an understanding of the dynamic nature of human action in social settings. The methodology is inductive; data is not collected to prove theory, theory is grounded in the data. Findings and theory are created through dialectic interaction between researcher and respondents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The methodology and emergent paradigm are explained in detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

Data collection for this study was accomplished through document analysis of each respondent's curriculum vitae and through in-depth interviews with six women senior academic officers at community colleges in New England. Study participants were identified from the *1994 Higher Education Directory* (Rodenhouse, 1994). A preliminary study questionnaire was developed to find cases which portray as many of the individual and group realities as exist in any given context: women from different academic disciplines, women who began their careers as faculty, women who are professional administrators (never held a full-time faculty position), women who came to their positions from within their current institution, and women who came to their

current positions by direct application. Each female senior academic officer in New England Community Colleges received the questionnaire. To achieve maximum variation through purposive sampling, I used the results of the questionnaire to choose and interview six subjects who achieved their current positions through different means. The findings of these interviews are presented as case studies in Chapter Four of the dissertation.

Limitations of the Study

Although it would be interesting to study leadership and interesting to study the career development of all senior women administrators, the techniques of data collection and analysis in a qualitative study are too labor intensive to study every phenomena of interest. The number of respondents must be limited and the research focused. At the same time, the inquirer cannot study everything about the research setting nor is everything worthy of study (Powdermaker, 1966). Therefore, this study is limited to the career development of senior women academic officers in community colleges.

Another limitation of a Naturalistic Inquiry is the study cannot be comparative nor can the results be used to predict or control. The research cannot serve as a comparative study on career development between community colleges and four-year colleges, nor can it serve as a comparative study on the differences between men and women's career development. A comparative study assumes that there is a basis of comparison in which generalizations can be made about both (Manning, 1989). The

naturalistic inquirer does not look for generalizations. The naturalist believes and understands that phenomena are nongenerizable, they are time- and context-dependent. The results of the study can lead to a better understanding about the career development of these women, however, the results cannot be used to predict career development for all women. Results can be transferred from one similar context to another, but the burden of truth lies with the transferrer (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of the study, the following terms are defined:

A career or occupation is work which is paid, usually accompanied by benefits. It requires training of some sort, has opportunities for advancement, and maintains some semblance of job security (Canada, 1989).

A higher education administration career refers to "a series of jobs involving tasks of governance and management that over time tend to have increasing responsibility, reward, and recognition" (Moore, 1984, p. 9).

A senior level administrator is someone who manages, directs or heads a specific department, division, or program at the college. These positions include: president, vice-president, senior academic officer, senior development officer, senior business officer, and senior student life officer. Senior academic officer's titles vary. I used the same criteria used in the *Higher Education Directory* for determining the senior academic officer at each two-year institution (Rodenhouse, 1994).

A nontraditional career, as it applies to this study, is a career not considered traditional to a gender. This could also apply to race and social class. Although there are many women in higher education administration, they are concentrated in low-level and middle management positions rather than at the senior level. Thus, I will define senior academic administrative positions as nontraditional for women.

Professional development is an "activity leading to increased knowledge and competence in one's present position or to enhance qualifications for a more responsible position" (Tinsley, 1984, p. 18).

Mentoring is the interaction between a junior colleague (protégé) and a senior colleague (mentor) which promotes the career and psychosocial development of the protégé (Kram, 1985).

A mentor is an individual who guides, sponsors, advises, protects, and takes special interest in the protégé's professional development (Sands, Parson & Duane, 1991).

A role model is a person whose behavior consists of certain characteristics or who "demonstrates valued behavior, attitudes and/or skills" which aid the protégé (Kram, 1985, p. 162).

Gender-typing is the process of "developing traits and behaviors that mirror society's view of what is appropriate for male or female and coming to hold these masculine/feminine traits and behaviors as part of one's self-concept" (Unger & Crawford, 1992, p. 28).

Summary

I was drawn to this study for a number of very personal reasons. Because the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection in a qualitative study, the values, prior experiences, and assumptions of the researcher set the boundaries of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988). For the last six years I have served as a faculty member at a two-year public technical college. My career goal is to achieve a senior academic officer position at a two-year community or technical college. I strongly believe the open door mission of community colleges and culture of these institutions allows women and other minorities to aspire to and achieve senior positions more readily than at four-year colleges and universities. Consequently, these beliefs and professional experiences along with the theory garnered from the literature influenced the boundaries of the study and created an informed position from which to begin the research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature comprises three sections. The first section is an exploration of the literature on the organizational structure of higher education and the career paths and pattern people take to achieve senior academic administrative positions. The second is an examination of the career development literature. To gain an understanding of individual career development, I looked to psychology and sociology, two different traditions of scholarship which focus on this issue. The review concludes in the third section with a look at how role models and mentors influence occupational choice, administrative behavior, and career mobility. The goal of the review is to promote a fuller understanding of the processes of career development and women's professional achievement.

Career Paths and Patterns

Career advancement involves a sequence of position changes. In higher education administration, advancement means climbing up the administrative hierarchy. Accepting the premise that position changes are a primary means of career advancement, there remains however a paucity of research about the career paths of senior women administrators over periods of time. Many of the longitudinal studies are gender-neutral, including both males and females as study participants. Most of the research on women has documented the kinds of positions and the numbers of positions

held by female administrators. Mostly, it is limited to descriptions of personal characteristics, such as age and educational level; an analysis of barriers to advancement which reflect issues of gender bias; and descriptions of career characteristics, such as years at current institution and years in current position. But what is available provides us with some interesting insight into the career advancement of women.

Career Ladders

In a hierarchical organization, such as that which defines the administrative organization in higher education, successive or multiple positions upward exist. Careers have direction. Thus the metaphor of a ladder with positions clearly defined and tightly ordered in a sequence of increasing responsibility describes the career path to senior positions in higher education (Moore, 1984; Twombley, 1990). Just how do administrators maneuver upon the ladder on their way to the top?

Prior to the mid-1980s, most researchers found that college presidents and senior-level academic administrators began their professional careers as faculty, moving into positions in administration as a means of advancement. A career leading to a senior academic position required progressive administrative responsibility (Allen, 1984). Cohen and March (1974) defined the career path to the presidency as a climb up a hierarchical ladder, denoting four common positions on the ladder. For each higher position on the ladder, a series of more or less standard positions preceded it.

President

↑

Provost

↑

Academic Dean

↑

Department Chair

↑

Faculty

Figure 1

Normative Presidential Career Path
(Cohen & March, 1974)

In 1983, Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, and Bragg surveyed senior-level line administrators at four-year institutions in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the path to both the presidency and an academic deanship. They utilized Cohen and March's normative career path in assessing the careers of 156 presidents. Their results showed that a strictly linear hierarchical model did not accurately reflect the actual experience of most college and university presidents; they found 15 different variations were necessary to capture all of the president's career paths. Most started their careers as faculty, however, 19% had never held a faculty position. Those who started as faculty took various routes to the top; some stepped on all of the rungs of the ladder, while others skipped rungs and advanced more quickly. Their paths were non-linear but they all held at least one of the four common positions. The best predictor of a presidency was a position as a provost.

The position of academic dean occupies a central position between the faculty and senior administration. To analyze the career path of the academic dean, Moore et al. in the same study, developed a career ladder similar to Cohen and March's normative ladder to the presidency.

Analyzing the careers of 647 deans, they discovered that most academic deans came to their position from the faculty. Very few had held positions as a department chair. Most who had been associate or assistant academic deans came to this position from another institution. The same holds true for community college senior academic officers. The most common previous position for community college senior academic officers was department head or assistant dean (Twombley, 1986).

Academic Dean

↑

Assistant, Associate Dean

↑

Department Chair

↑

Faculty

Figure 2

Normative Academic Dean Career Path
(Moore, Salimbene, Marlier & Bragg, 1983)

Many other researchers have studied administrative careers and concluded that academic administrative careers in higher education are serendipitous — academics "fall into" administrative positions (Ross & Green, 1990). Few people begin their careers in the professorate intending on becoming administrators, yet most academic administrators start their careers as faculty. The career of senior academic officers position in community colleges are similar; they climb to their positions from senior faculty positions (Twombley, 1988; Twombley, 1990).

It seems puzzling therefore to continue to accept a hierarchical ladder for higher education organizations if administrators do not step on all of the rungs on their way up. However, it still holds true that for each top position in academic administration, a series of more or less standard positions precedes it (Moore, 1984). Much research still indicates that to climb to a senior position, one still must step on at least one or two of the rungs; the first step being a member of the faculty. And there is no doubt that the single most important issue for successful aspirants to senior academic positions is the quality of their academic experience.

Obtaining the Next Administrative Position on the Ladder

How does the individual move from one position up the ladder to the next? Socolow (1978) examined how administrators got their jobs. To observe trends and changes in hiring practices, he examined job notices for four-year colleges and universities posted in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* over a three month period. He then followed up with a questionnaire and letter to each of the institutions inquiring

on the candidate hired for the position. Socolow found that jobs at the senior level were only filled by direct application 24% of the time. The candidate chosen was most likely to have come from within the institution or to have been nominated for the position. Sagaria (1986) found similar results. In a study on senior academic officers at four-year colleges and universities, Sagaria found that over one-third were nominated for their current position. Half had found out about their position by either a member of the search committee or by personal contacts not on the search committee. Personal contacts and nominations, then, appear to be important in the search process and selection of senior administrators at four-year colleges.

Studies on community college senior administrative positions have shown different results. The most popular job search strategy at community colleges was direct application. Almost half of all senior administrators came to their current position by way of direct application. Less than 40% found out about their current position by personal contact. Men (40.5%) were more likely than women (35.7%) to rate personal contacts as the most important source of information (Moore, Twombley, & Martorana, 1985; Twombley & Moore, 1987). Therefore, senior community college administrators tend to develop their careers from a grass-roots effort; they apply for vacant positions more often then they are nominated for, or promoted to, a position.

Women and the Administrative Ladder

The question of interest in this analysis is what path do women take to the top? Because there were so few women in senior positions prior to the mid-1980s, gender was not a category of analysis in the studies described. These works, therefore, do not tell us much about the paths taken by women. More recently however, many women have successfully achieved presidencies and another handful have achieved senior-level positions. As a result, studies have been conducted on the advancement of women to these senior-level positions. How have these women navigated the hierarchical structure?

Many of the studies on higher education administration have described higher education institutions as hierarchies. Others have described this hierarchy as a pyramidal structure in which women are clustered near the bottom of the pyramid. These positions are often times described as "women's work" (Kaplan & Tinsley 1989; Tinsley, 1983). They hold positions in continuing education, run programs that deal with women or minorities, and serve as deans of professional schools in which the students are primarily women. Women are far more likely to be assistants and associates, positions defined as staff by Moore and Sagaria (1982), and remain underrepresented in positions of influence such as chief academic officers and financial planning officers, positions defined as line. A 1985-1986 Administrative Compensation Survey found that the largest numbers of women were clustered in the following positions: director of financial aid, director of library services, director of student placement, and director of student affairs (Chamberlain; 1991).

Barriers and Myths

To understand the paths of those who have made it, we need to pay some heed to some of the reasons large numbers of women have remain clustered at the bottom of the pyramid. What are the myths and barriers which preclude women from achieving success?

Both internal and external barriers may hinder the advancement of more women into senior positions. Internal barriers relate to one's own ambivalence about societal roles, fear of success, and the fear of the consequences of career success (Horner, 1972; Ironside, 1981; Tinsley, 1984). The lack of women in senior level positions sets a subtle limit on less senior women's perception of what is possible and worth striving for.

External barriers revolve around organizational issues. The practice of reproducing one's self (homosocial reproduction) has consequences for women in higher education because men hold the vast majority of senior level positions. Like breeds like. And, because decision makers make choices based on ascribed characteristics such as gender to determine who is the right type of person for the job, gender may serve women and men differently for promotion and hiring (Johnsrud, 1991b; Sagaria, 1988). Moore and Sagaria's (1982) results indicate that movement from staff positions, those most populated by women, to senior positions is atypical. The normative career path to a senior position is through line positions. These internal issues and external restraints teamed with the type of entry positions most often held by women all coalesce to pose barriers to advancement for women.

A number of myths about women in higher education must also be dispelled. First is the myth that women are not mobile and are unwilling to relocate. Promotion within an organization is a primary means for individuals to advance their careers yet women have tended to build their careers by moving between institutions (Johnsrud, 1991b; Moore, 1983; Sagaria, 1988). Research has documented that women were more mobile than men in the 1970s and were more willing to relocate to advance their careers; they showed more desire to move than men and anticipated that they would be required to move (Moore, 1983; Sagaria, 1988; Touchton et al., 1993). Perpetuating this myth may be another factor which hinders the career advancement of women in higher education.

The second myth is that women don't seek senior-level administrative positions. "In short, the fact that men are selected for administrative positions more often than women coupled with evidence that more women than men seek administrative position changes suggests that organizational hiring and promotion practices more so than personal aspiration or decisions of candidates influence the structuring of careers by gender" (Sagaria, 1988, p. 307). The question that remains is: how have achievers overcome these barriers and myths? The answer may lie in exploring the paths they have taken to success.

Women's Paths and Patterns

Senior administrative women hold their highest degrees in education, humanities, or the fine arts (Ironside, 1981; Touchton et al., 1993). About one third

start their careers in higher education immediately following graduation from an undergraduate program. The remaining two-thirds make the decision to enter the academic arena late in their educational preparation and do not attend graduate school immediately upon completing the bachelor's degree (Christiansen, Macagno-Shang, Staley, Stamler, Johnson, 1989; Slimmer, 1984). In their study of women college presidents Touchton, Shavlick and Davis (1993) found that 84% demonstrated a professional commitment to education in some way; almost half of the study participants taught in the K-12 system.

Very few senior women administrators took "time-out" during their career advancement. For the most part, the return to graduate school was the only major interruption in the work sequence. Eighty four percent of the respondents in Touchton et al. (1993) study had never been out of the job market for anything other than professional reasons. This dispels another popular myth that women interrupt their career advancement to raise children. On the contrary, most sacrificed family for their career (Ironside, 1981; Slimmer, 1984; Touchton et al., 1993).

Most begin their careers along the most familiar route, the academic track. They have experience in either public school systems or have held a faculty position in an academic department (Ironside, 1981; Touchton, Shavlick & Davis, 1993; Warner, Brazzell, Allen, Bostick & Marin, 1988). Faculty experience seems to provide one of the most direct paths to positions in academic affairs and positions in academic affairs seem to launch women into senior level positions. Touchton et al. (1993) found that

positions in academic affairs, vice presidencies, and other presidencies were the three "springboard" positions for women who achieved presidencies.

Most successful women take deliberate steps to assure their success. They find ways to enhance their career and further their own career advancement and development. They establish early on a pattern of taking on more responsibility; they serve on numerous committees and task forces, make themselves available for special assignments, and attend professional meetings. Most participate in professional activities related to advancement including: ACE National Identification Programs, ACE National forums, Bryn Mawr/HERS Summer program, and the American Association for Community Colleges leadership development programs. They also take deliberate steps to garner experience in public speaking, teaching, and institutional politics (Ironside, 1981; Slimmer, 1984; Touchton et al., 1993). And it also seems apparent that one sure path to senior academic administrative positions is through academic affairs. Success in administration most often begins in the classroom teaching undergraduate students (Allen, 1984).

Career Development: An Overview of Major Theories

For many years the major studies on career development have concentrated on men. Researchers assumed that a women's first occupational choice was as homemaker and mother, ie., women's vocational interests were tied to traditional sex-role stereotypes (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). Ginzberg, Ginzberg, Axelrad, and Herma developed the first model of occupational choice in 1951. This model like Zytowkski's

model in 1969 was predicated on society's view that women's first occupational choice was linked to her reproductive function. Zytowkski did however recognize that societal changes would affect models of career development and he hoped that "altered social expectations and technological innovation will ultimately result in the obsolescence of this entire scheme" (p. 664).

As scholars began developing models to explain career development, they either developed generic, ungendered models or investigated how women's careers deviated from the established theories based on men's development. Holland's theory, based on personality characteristics, and Krumboltz's theory, a reflection of social learning theory, did not consider gender as a category of analysis. Others such as Farmer (1976), Astin (1984), and Jenkins (1989) studied how women's development differed from men's.

Much has changed since 1951. Today, career psychologist and sociologists pay attention to issues of gender when thinking about career development. But there is still much work to be accomplished. There are very few models developed specifically for women and there are no models to explain the career development of women who choose careers in higher education administration. Given the paucity of women in senior-level administrative positions, it is surprising that there is so little literature written on the career development of these unique and pioneering women.

In an attempt to shed light on the careers of women who have been successful in achieving senior-level administrative positions, this portion of the review is organized in three sections. The first section looks at the literature on the major theories of

career development, and especially at the literature on occupational choice. The second section looks at the literature on gender issues and career choice. Are there gender related issues which limit the range of career options both pursued and suggested to women? This review will close with an exploration of more recent theories of occupational choice developed to examine the relationship between gender roles and women's career choice.

Major Theories

The first researchers to develop a theory on career development were Ginzberg, Ginzberg, Axelrad, and Herma (1951). They postulated that occupational choice was part of a maturation process which transpired over three distinct stages: fantasy choice at 6-11 years of age, tentative choice at ages 11-18, and realistic choice between the ages of 19 and 22. They posited that career decision-making was virtually an irreversible process based on compromises. Choice involved the balancing of interests within the limitations of opportunities, aptitudes and life realities. People made career choices based on their experiences yet these choices were limited by their family expectations and socioeconomic status. Ginzberg et al., assumed that women's first occupational choice was as homemaker and mother and any career outside of the home was secondary.

> The strategic influences on the girls are decidedly different from those on the men by reason of one major consideration: The girls are thinking of and planning for their future primarily in terms of marriage; everything else falls into a subsidiary position. Because of this they are not deeply concerned about an occupation. (p. 175)

Zytowski (1969) agreed with Ginzberg et al.'s premise that being a homemaker and mother was an occupational choice. He proposed developing a theory of occupational choice which took into consideration the "distinct anatomical function" of women (p. 661). His nine postulates reflected his belief that women's career development revolved around the reproductive function. However, he did not believe that there was any reason to develop distinct models for women if we considered mothering as part of the career development process. "No special theory of vocational development for women would be necessary if the portion of their lives which they spend as mother and homemaker could be regarded as one of the several occupations which they have available to choose from" (p. 660).

In 1972, Ginzberg reformulated his 1951 theory. He recognized that career choice was not irreversible or immutable. Career choice continues over a life-long span. "Our reformulated theory is that *occupational choice is a life-long process of decision-making in which the individual seeks to find the optimal fit between his* [sic] *career preparation and goals and the realities of the world of work*" (p. 172; italics in original). He also abolished his notion that career choice was based on compromise and reformulated his theory to acknowledge that people make career decisions striving to optimize their satisfactions by finding the best possible fit between their priorities and desires, and their opportunities. His theory on women also changed based on his research on women. He reformulated his theory on women's career development to reflect his premise that women made career choices in relation to family issues. Women's development did not conform to his male model.

> One of the striking differences that we found between our parallel investigations of the career development of men and women was that men followed a relatively simple and straightforward pattern compared with the much more complex career and life patterns characteristic of the majority of our women... Each decision with respect to their jobs [women's] might have an even greater impact on their families than on their careers, just as actions with respect to their homes and children might have primary consequences on the job arena (Ginzberg, 1966, p. 4-5).

Since Ginzberg's first attempt at explaining career choice, psychologists and sociologists have developed numerous theories on occupational choice. For the sake of brevity, I have chosen to focus on two of the more widely recognized theories, Holland's typology theory and Krumboltz's social learning theory. Although neither theorist used gender as a category of analysis, their work lay the groundwork for later theories which take into account issues of gender and sex-role stereotyping.

Holland's Typology Theory

Holland (1985) postulated that people choose work environments which are congruent with their personalities; the description of one's vocational choice is also a description of one's personality. "The choice of an occupation is an expression of personality and not a random event .... Occupational achievement, stability, and satisfaction depend on the congruence between one's personality and the job environment" (in Weinrach & Srebalus, 1985, p. 40). His theory was based on four basic assumptions:

1. In our culture, most persons can be categorized as one of six types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, or conventional.
2. There are six types of environments: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional, and each environment is populated by individuals of the corresponding personality types.
3. People search for environments which will let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles.
4. Behavior is determined by an interaction between personality and environment (Weinrach & Srebalus, 1985, pp. 40-41).

Holland believed different types of people work better in certain types of environments, thus, career choice is based on finding a fit between personality and environment. He created a typology hexagon which framed the essence of his theory. There are high levels of consistency between personality types adjacent on the hexagon with some pairs having more in common than others. The distances between the types of environments and personalities on the hexagon are inversely proportional to the relationships between them. Some people and environments are pure; they show greater resemblance to one type and less to others. To choose a career, one must have a clear picture of one's goals, interests, and talents. And, people require work environments which are congruent with their personality (Weinrach & Srebalus,

1985). From these concepts, he developed a typology questionnaire which is used today by career counselors to assist people in making career choices.

Holland's typology theory has many weaknesses as well as strengths, especially when it is applied to women and occupational choice. It is critical that Holland's theory be challenged because it is so often used by career counselors. One of its most significant weaknesses is that the theory assumes all people function in the same manner regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic class. He overlooks gender and race stereotyping and the role they may play in limiting vocational choice and vocational opportunities. Subsequently, Holland's theory and his typology testing have been accused by feminist scholars as being sexist. Feminist researchers have shown that women score higher on social and artistic categories while men score higher on conventional and realistic categories. In response to this critique, Holland has argued that this phenomena is not the result of a sex-biased typology, but rather is due to societal gender stereotyping and socialization (Weinrach & Srebalus, 1985). Therefore, it seems, even Holland has acknowledged that issues of gender and female socialization must be taken into account when theorizing career development.

One of the strengths of this theory is that it prods us to think about the personalities of people who achieve senior-level administrative positions. Do leaders possess certain personality characteristics which enable them to be successful? Research on pioneer women, or women who choose nontraditional occupations, clearly shows that these women possess atypical personality characteristics. These characteristics are often acknowledged as those traits necessary for leadership. Later in

this review, I will examine some of these predictor variables for nontraditional career choice. Research on these variables confirm in part Holland's theory of congruence; people choose occupational environments which correspond to their personality type (Wolf & Betz, 1981).

In short, Holland's theory is based on personality typology. The theory does not take into account educational level, nor does it account for learning or experiences. The next theory of interest is a theory based on social learning. By focusing on learning experiences, this theory accounts for learned sex-roles and gender stereotyping.

Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory recognizes that humans are intelligent, problem solving individuals. Humans strive at all times to understand their environment and in turn, attempt to control the environment to suit their purposes and needs (Crawford & Unger, 1992; Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1985). Krumboltz's theory of career decision-making is based on social learning theory. His theory is designed to answer three questions: 1) why do people enter particular educational programs or occupations? 2) why do people make changes in occupations at certain points in their lives? and 3) why do people express various preferences for different types of occupations at selected points in their lives? (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1985).

Krumboltz's theory embraces four categories of factors which influence the career decision-making of individuals: genetic endowment and special abilities,

environmental conditions and events, learning experiences, and task approach skills. These four categories and the theory which evolves from them, suggest that for maximum career development to occur, all individuals must have sufficient opportunities to be exposed to wide range of experiences. What is learned from the experiences coupled with the cognitive ability of the individual to synthesize these experiences, affects the career decision-making process. "As a result of learning experiences and the generalizations and skills that develop from them, individuals engage in various behaviors that lead to entry into a career... Behaviors and decisions that are relevant to the career-planning process occurs throughout one's lifetime" (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1985, p. 161).

Krumboltz's theory may be more applicable to the career development of women than Holland's theory because social learning theory takes into account differences experienced by gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. But, the major weakness of these two theories and of most other theories on career development is that research has suggested that women's occupational pursuits may be limited by gender stereotyping. "Sex has been a far more powerful predictor of vocational choices in women than have the other factors postulated as important in theories focusing, either explicitly or implicitly, on men's career development" (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, p. 9). For example, women's intellectual talents may not be reflected in their educational and occupational aspirations. Many researchers have found that women's career aspirations are frequently lower than the aspirations of men with comparable levels of ability (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Fassinger, 1985).

So how do sex-role stereotypes affect occupational choice? Social traditions imply that a woman's career decision-making is predicated on two choices. First, she must choose whether she wishes to make her career primary or her role as mother. Once she chooses which is primary, she must then choose an occupation either from the range of occupations considered by society to be traditional for women or she may step outside of traditional social roles and choose an occupation nontraditional to her gender (Astin, 1984; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Farmer, 1976; Gottfredson, 1981; Jenkins, 1989; Swanson & Tokar, 1991; Zytowski, 1969). Even Krumboltz recognized that women's career choice was influenced by cultural norms regarding the acceptability of pursuing certain occupational fields (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1985).

Although both Holland's and Krumboltz's theories are helpful in laying the groundwork for an understanding of career development, they do not take into account how traditional cultural norms and traditional gender-based social roles influence women's occupational choice. The next segment of the review will explore some of the barriers based on gender which may limit the range of occupational choices available to women. I will also analyze how successful pioneer, or nontraditional women, have overcome these gender barriers. Do these women possess characteristics and traits which differ from women who choose traditional female roles?

Gender Issues and Career Development

Some of the major variables which affect women's vocational behavior, such as sex-role conflicts, sense of self, and barriers to education, have been omitted or

ignored in the development of theories on career development. Mainstream culture changes more slowly than many of us wish, and despite new occupational opportunities for women, gender-role stereotyping and the strength of traditional value systems frequently influence women's vocational choices.

Sex-Role Conflicts

The vocational interests of women have been strongly influenced by traditional sex-role socialization. "A women's life roles and vocational choices are predictable not on the basis of her characteristics as an individual, but on her sex" (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, p. 9). Both Ginzberg and Zytowski noted in their theories about women's career development that the reproductive functions of a woman's life conflicts with or influences her vocational choices. In essence, gender-based social roles influence career aspirations. To achieve an understanding of the factors which influence women's entry into occupations, we must begin to understand the relationship between occupational choice and traditional sex-roles.

Eisenhart (1985) interviewed female college students about their choice of majors and subsequent career choices. She found that women's earliest career choices were based on portrayals of women in popular culture. Girls see women as fashion models, mothers, nurses, teachers, or engaged in other traditional occupations in movies, magazines and television shows. The influence of popular culture as well as that of traditional family values socialize women at an early stage into choosing traditional female occupations. They choose careers based on a limited range of

experiences and associations, their actions are "simplified, rational, and purposeful, and they are also traditional" (p. 265).

Swanson and Tokar (1991) and Farmer (1976) found similar results. The societal pressure to fulfill multiple responsibilities of motherhood, marriage and career, created obstacles and barriers to women's career choices. Women perceive the existence of career-related barriers grounded in traditional gender-based social roles and these operate to limit their vocational and educational aspirations.

But, an interesting paradox exists. Studies on women who choose nontraditional careers have found that these women are not influenced by gender-based social roles. They infrequently engage in sex-role stereotyping; pioneer women do not place high value on the appropriate and inappropriate behaviors ascribed by society to gender (Crawford, 1978). They "have broader conceptions of the female role and are less sex-role stereotyped than their counterparts aspiring to or employed in female typical occupations" (Mazen & Lemkau, 1990, p. 47). This attribute influences their conceptions of their role at home and toward a family. They see less conflict in combining the roles of career and family and maintain less traditional attitudes toward the roles of men and women (Ellerman & Johnston, 1988; Murrell, 1991). Nontraditional women were also less committed to family and home than women in traditional fields. Jagacinski (1987) found that nontraditional women often sacrificed having children to avoid career-family role conflicts. Thus, the success of high achieving women in nontraditional occupations can be tied to their capacity to reject sex-role stereotypes.

Sense of Self and Connectedness

Sense of self and connectedness are two other factors which affect vocational choice. For women, self-concept is experienced differently than for men. "Male and female voices typically have spoken of different truths, the former the role of separation in development as it comes to define and empower self, the latter of the ongoing process of attachment that creates and sustains the human community" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 18). Women's sense of self is perceived in the context of connection with and responsiveness to others. Women's sense of identity is embedded in this connection with others (Forrest & Mikolaitis, 1986). Just how does this sense of self and connectedness affect career choice?

Women are more likely to make career choices based on logical perceptions about what is appropriate for women, ie, what their culture has deemed appropriate. And because this sense of self is tied to connectedness, they are most likely to choose a career in which they can be connected to others and be involved in helping others (Eisenhart, 1985; Forrest & Mikolaitis, 1986; Stonewater, 1989; Swanson & Tokar, 1991). "Women whose self-descriptions and real-life moral conflicts express a predominately connected self identity would be more likely to prefer work environments where this component of their identity would be expressed and valued" (Forrest & Mikolaitis, 1986, p. 83). Therefore, an appropriate model for the career development of women must recognize both the cultural constraints and the importance of connectedness in women's occupational choices.

Education

Educational preparation is the door to occupational opportunities; lack of education closes the door to options, educational achievement opens those doors. In terms of career development, the level of education one attains may be the most important career decision made. Numerous studies have shown that the more education a woman receives, the more likely she is to be working outside of the home. Therefore, educational attainment must be considered an important variable in career development (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1985; Harmon, 1989).

Considering the importance of education to career development, we need to recognize that traditional gender-based social roles also affect educational achievement. Numerous studies have shown that females tend to have lower educational aspirations than males. This is most often attributed to gender bias in both the curriculum and the presentation of the curriculum (The Wellseley College Center for Research on Women, 1993; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Sadker, Sadker, Fox & Salata 1993). Myra and David Sadker have written two well regarded books whose titles, *Failing at Fairness* and *How Schools Shortchange Girls*, reflect the gender bias in secondary schools. This bias greatly hampers the educational attainment and consequently, the career attainment of women.

In terms of higher education, women continue to be educationally disadvantaged. Although the numbers of women pursuing degrees in higher education has increased dramatically since the 1960s, most often, women continue to be encouraged to pursue traditional female occupations. Female enrollment is highest in

nursing programs, secondary education programs, and programs in the social sciences and humanities. All of these fields are traditional for women and lead to lower paying, less prestigious occupations (Chamberlain, 1991). "The status of women in higher education is characterized by the juxtaposition of progress in enrollment and earned degree percentages and some movement into male-dominated fields, and, in contrast, continued disadvantage relative to men as a group. Most women still earn their degrees in lower-paying, lower-status, female-intensive fields" (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, pp. 64-65).

Not all is negative however. Some women have surmounted the gender bias in the curriculum and found ways to circumnavigate society's traditional attitudes. Research has shown that pioneer women (nontraditional women) were more often exposed to a family environment in which they were stimulated to explore and develop independently (Lemkau, 1979; Lemkau, 1983; William & McCullers, 1983). They were recipients of open encouragement, support of achievement, and educational attainment and as a result, were notably career oriented (Jagacinski, 1987; Henning & Jardim, 1981; Lemkau, 1979; Lemkau, 1983; Williams & McCullers, 1983). They were encouraged by their parents to explore an unusually wide range of behaviors and career options, an "androgynous exploration of masculine as well as feminine endeavors" (Lemkau, 1979, p. 228). And they viewed their parents as supportive of their career aspirations and educational aspirations (Henning & Jardim, 1981; Jagacinski, 1987). Thus, it seems evident that a family environment in which

education is valued and encouraged for women opens up many doors and is an important factor in career development.

Predictor Variables for Nontraditional Career Choice

Obviously, there are some women who are able to ignore traditional sex-role stereotypes and overcome these barriers and they do choose occupations considered nontraditional to their gender. What are some of the psychosocial characteristics of these women? An understanding of these variable is critical to comprehending the career development of achievers.

Significant research has been completed in this area with four elements identified which characterize nontraditional, or pioneer, women: personality characteristics; self-efficacy, self-esteem and motivation; influence of parents and families; and idea orientation. An exploration of these elements will show that these women possess characteristics which allow them to be adaptive to their professional life-styles and role expectations and make occupational choices disregarding gender-based social roles.

Personality Characteristics

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI), a test used to codify personality characteristics as either masculine, feminine, or androgynous, has been used by many researchers to correlate the personality characteristics of men and women to career choice. These researchers have documented that women in nontraditional occupations

and female students in male-dominated majors in college score higher on the masculine dimension than women in female traditional occupations. Strange and Rea (1983) subjected equal numbers of male and female college students in traditional and nontraditional majors to the BSRI to determine subject sex-role self-concept. They found that female undergraduates in male-dominated majors more often reported masculine self-concepts than females in female-dominated majors. Likewise, women in traditional occupations scored higher on the feminine dimension of the BSRI. Other researchers documented similar results. Women in nontraditional occupations tended to score more masculine when subjected to a sex role test than women in traditional occupations (Bachtold, 1976; Lemkau, 1979; Lemkau, 1983; Mazen & Lemkau, 1990; Murrell, 1991; Nevill & Schlecker, 1988; Shann, 1983; Williams & McCullers, 1983).

Other studies found that nontraditional women were intellectually bright and psychologically masculine. Lemkau (1979) described nontraditional women as "tough-minded realists who were consistently brighter, more dominant, adventurous, and radical" than women in traditional occupations (p. 225). These pioneer women were more assertive and possessed high needs for achievement, autonomy, dominance, and status (Bachtold, 1976; Chusmir, 1983; Mazen & Lemkau, 1990). This propensity for women in nontraditional occupations to possess masculine personality characteristics confirms Holland's theory of congruence; people seek occupational environments which correspond to their personality type (Wolfe & Betz, 1981). In other words, masculine-typed women were more likely to choose options congruent with their personality, ie., careers in traditionally male fields, and be achievers.

Self-Efficacy, Self-Esteem and Motivation

Self-efficacy is a person's belief concerning his/her ability to successfully perform a given task or behavior (Nevill & Schlecker, 1988). Women choosing nontraditional occupations showed a high level of academic self-efficacy (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). "Strong self-efficacy expectations and assertiveness were shown to be associated with increased willingness to engage in career-related activities of nontraditional occupations..." (Nevill & Schlecker, 1988, p. 95).

Nontraditional women believed they had the ability to succeed in a nontraditional occupation, were self-confident, and showed a high level of self-esteem (Bachtold, 1976; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1978; Mazen & Lemkau, 1990; Nevill & Schlecker, 1988). They were also highly motivated; challenge was an important component of occupational choice (Eden, 1993). They set high career goals for themselves and believed their career was primary to their life-style. Conceiving that career choice was an important aspect of their life, they associated career choice with career salience and chose a challenging and demanding career (Eden, 1993; Ellerman & Johnston, 1988; Lemkau, 1979; Murrell, 1991).

Influence of Parents and Families

Since children learn characteristics and behavior patterns from adults (Crawford & Unger, 1992), it would seem likely that family background and home environment would play a primary role in the process of career development. Many researchers have documented the importance of the mother-daughter relationship and have

surmised that career choice depends on the educational level and employment status of the mother (Crawford, 1978; Lemkau, 1979; Tangri, 1972). Daughters of less traditional mothers, those who were educated or worked outside of the home, were more likely to choose nontraditional careers than daughters of less educated, nonworking mothers. The father-daughter relationship was also important to career choice. Nontraditional women were more likely to have a stronger relationship with their father than traditional women (Eden, 1993; Lemkau, 1983). Their fathers were more likely to be better educated than the fathers of traditional women (Jagacinski, 1987). Thus these women tended to come from more highly educated families — families in which one or both of the parents were employed in a professional occupation. These parents portrayed for their daughters strong female and male role models.

Idea Orientation

Studies have shown that people choose male-dominated fields for their status and potential, and for material gain while others choose female-dominated fields for their value on service and interpersonal skills. Thus, most men choose occupations for economic and political reasons while women were more often concerned with the social aspects of the job (Murrell, 1991; Strange & Rea, 1983). But what about women who select male-dominated fields? Women who achieve nontraditional occupations were slightly more oriented to ideas than traditional women but these women still possessed the people oriented traits of warmth and expressiveness, traits socially constructed as

feminine (Lemkau, 1979). These women also possessed the ability to internalize the values traditionally transmitted to women (Eden, 1993); they still retained gender-related traits and characteristics but were able to adapt these attributes to fit their professional milieu. They possessed good coping skills and were able to adapt to the professional expectations demanded of them in a nontraditional field (Mazen & Lemkau, 1990).

There are two truths which seem apparent. First, there are sex-role stereotypes which create barriers to occupational and educational choices for some women. However, achievers or pioneer women seem to be able to reject sex-role stereotypes. Second, family attitudes towards traditional sex-roles strongly influence women's career aspirations; rearing daughters in an environment which is less sex-typed fosters more of the psychologically masculine characteristics possessed by successful nontraditional women. These women score higher on the male dimension of the BSRI and are more likely to choose and be successful in a nontraditional occupation. This is not to say that these women are more "masculine" than others; rather, they seem to be able to combine the characteristics, values, attitudes, goals and expectations of both sexes when making career decisions.

Therefore, it is obvious that a single model of career development does not work well for both men and women. There are gender-based factors which influence the career and educational aspirations of women. The next section examines the recent career development theories for women which take into account these gender-related constructs.

An Integrated Framework

The review of the literature on women's career choices revealed that the vocational interests of women are strongly influenced by traditional sex-role stereotypes. Therefore, the study of women's career development necessitates the examination of gender or sex-role factors. Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) integrated a large, disparate body of research into a framework to conceptualize the career development of women. To develop this model, they compiled a table of all of the factors which shape and influence women's occupational choices.

From this table, Betz and Fitzgerald devised a framework to explain women's career development. This model consists of four independent variables: previous work experience, academic success, role model influence, and perceived encouragement; and five dependent variables: attitudes toward work, attitudes toward self, sex-role attitudes, life-style preferences, and realism of career choice.

This framework also takes into account most of the factors and barriers which may impact women's educational and career aspirations. It is a structured, ordered model which demonstrates the interactions between all of the variables and the career decision-making process.

Table 1
Summary of Factors Facilitative of
Women's Career Development
(Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, p. 143)

Individual Variables	Background Variables
High Ability	Working Mother
Liberated sex role values	Supportive Father
Instrumentality	Highly supported parents
Androgynous personality	Female role models
High self-esteem	Work experience as an adolescent
Strong academic self-concept	Androgynous upbringing
Educational Variables	**Adult Lifestyle Variables**
Higher education	Late marriage or single
Continuation in math	No or few children

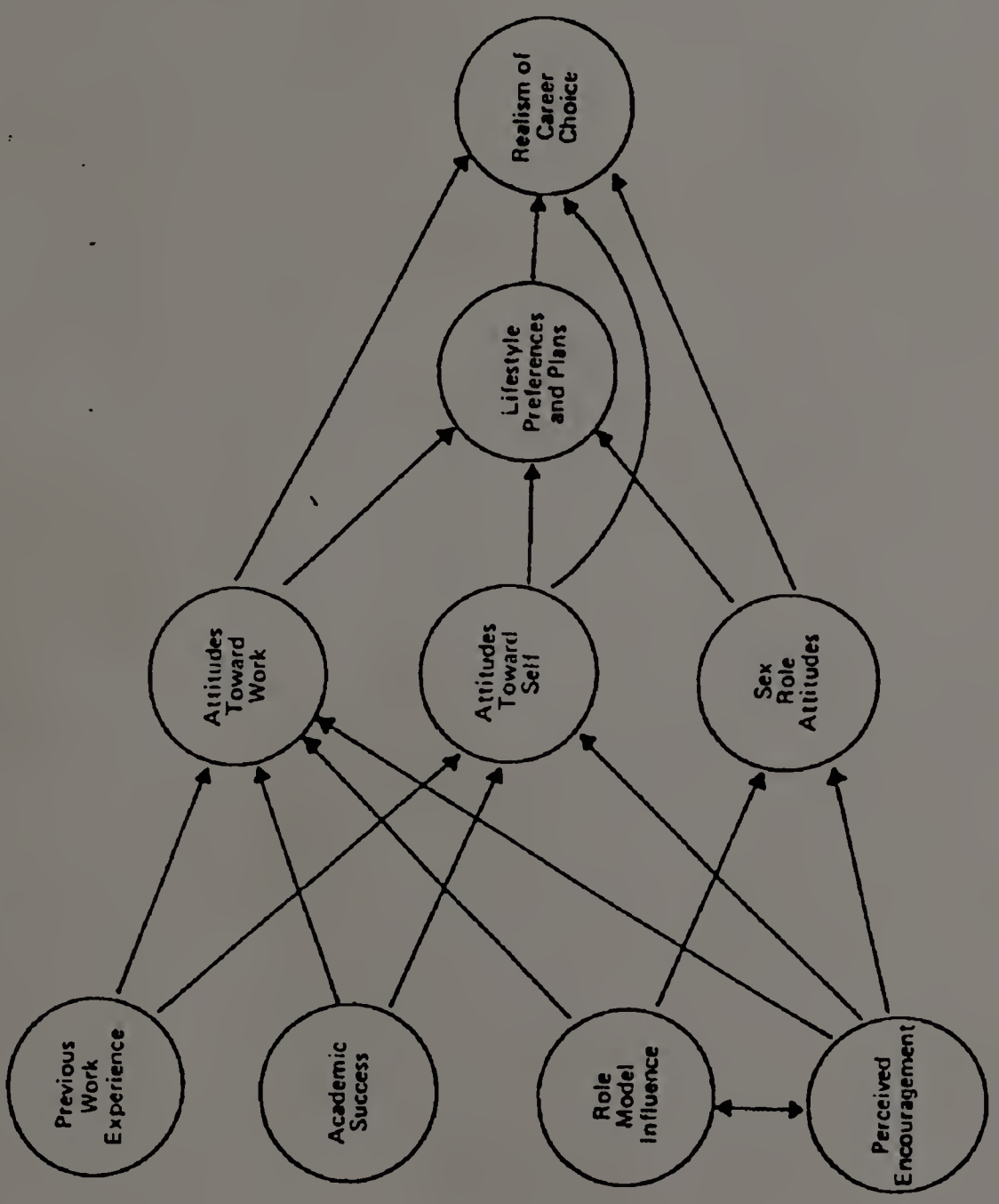

Figure 3
Betz's & Fitzgerald's Career Development Framework
Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, p. 144

Betz and Fitzgerald's model also manifests that realism of choice is a more appropriate way to address women's conflict between career and family. It allows women to determine whether or not their desire to have a family meshes with their occupational choice. And most importantly, it does not create a hierarchy with career or family taking precedence over the other.

Fassinger (1985) used Betz & Fitzgerald's model to study 309 junior and senior female college students living in university residence facilities. She developed an instrument to test for the four independent variables and the five dependent variables in Betz and Fitzgerald's framework. Her research supported Betz and Fitzgerald's notion that women's career choices are determined by their orientation toward family and their ability, achievement orientation, and feminist orientation. She also supported their premise that more attention be given to the dependent variable, realism of choice. Fassinger believed the placement of this variable in the framework was a step forward in "examining the *content* of women's career choices, rather than simply the desire to have a career at all" (p. 151; italics in original).

Fassinger also discovered that high ability feminists who are achievement oriented also appear to be strongly career oriented. She defined a feminist as a woman who was comfortable using the title Ms, was comfortable calling herself a feminist, and who possessed liberal sex-role attitudes. She postulated that this feminist orientation was another key predictor variable in women's career choice and suggested that it be added to the model. "That Feminist Orientation emerged as a key predictor variable in

this study underscores its potential importance in women's career development above and beyond a tendency toward more liberal sex-role attitudes" (Fassinger, 1985, p. 149).

Fassinger, Betz and Fitzgerald all recognized that their models were not completely indicative of the career development of all women. As society's attitudes towards sex-roles change, and as cultural norms shift pertaining to the appropriateness of certain careers for women, so will our thinking about career development. What they have offered us nonetheless, is a comprehensive framework which incorporates many of the variables which may influence women's career decision-making. Fassinger's study is of significant importance because it was one of the first studies to develop a instrument to measure constructs which appear to be related to women's career choice.

Shifts in Cultural Norms and Women's Career Development

Fassinger (1985) clearly discovered that a feminist orientation was a strong predictor of women's career choice. She also believed as more women identified with a feminist orientation, it would no longer be a factor in career development. Thus, career development theories for women should shift and change as society's attitudes shift and change pertaining to the role of women. Thus, we cannot understand women's behaviors without taking into account future trends in society's attitudes and other socio-historical forces (Tangri & Jenkins, 1986).

Over the last 25 years, the amount of time women intend to spend in the labor force has increased as has the number of women who have pursued nontraditional occupations. Harmon (1981, 1989) constructed two hypotheses to take into account these socio-historical shifts and their influence on women's career development. Her Opportunities Dominance Hypothesis proposed that wider opportunities available to women will in turn encourage women to take advantage of these opportunities. Recognizing that opportunities alone will not overcome issues of gender-stereotyping, she developed a Socialization Dominance Hypothesis; only a fundamental change in the early socialization of women will change their interests.

To test her hypotheses, Harmon studied two groups of first year college students; one group in 1968, the other in 1983. She ascertained that the women who were college students in the 1980s were influenced by socio-historical changes which occurred during their formative years. They showed a stronger feminist orientation at an earlier stage in their lives, were more advanced in their career development, and were considering more nontraditional occupations. The feminist movement of the 60s and 70s made a strong impression on these young women and subsequently on their attitudes about career and education thus, supporting her socialization dominance hypothesis.

Jenkins (1989) used Harmon's hypotheses to study the careers of women who had chosen three different occupations in 1967; noncollege teachers, college teachers, and business entrepreneurs. Jenkins considered noncollege teaching traditional for women, college teaching marginally traditional, and a career as a business entrepreneur

was nontraditional. She postulated that the social structures of occupations may shape women's choices and she was one of the first researchers to propose that career situation may influence family choices. This idea was antithetical to most other theories on career development which were premised on the idea that the reproductive function took priority over career. Jenkin's central argument was that for women as well as for men, a good match between worker and job structure was important for career attainment and retention. "The social structuring of occupations determines their accessibility to job aspirants... People are more likely to select jobs that they perceive to be congruent with their job values and that offer the forms of satisfaction they prefer" (p. 230).

Jenkins found that, in 1967, there were no significant differences on any of the career and family variables between any of the study groups. But, 14 years later, two groups differed markedly. Entrepreneurial women placed more value on career and less on family. The direct opposite was true for noncollege teachers supporting her theory that career type and job responsibilities influenced family choices.

Of the noncollege teachers in the study group, only 26% changed their careers over the 14 year period. Jenkins postulated that this supported Harmon's Socialization Dominance Hypothesis. Even though many changes had occurred in society regarding traditional gender roles between 1967 and 1983, these women still maintained very traditional attitudes toward work and family. On the other hand, the 26% who had changed positions most often migrated up to college teaching, supporting the Opportunities Dominance Hypothesis. Changes in attitudes in the entrepreneurial

women also supported the dominance theory. Although these women had fairly traditional attitudes toward family and career in 1967, these attitudes changed significantly. After 14 years of occupational experiences, these women placed a higher value on career and career advancement. Thus, as more opportunities were presented to these women, they adapted their career aspirations to take advantage of these opportunities. "As they mature, women have raised their career aspirations as they discover their abilities and broaden their career goals" (p. 232).

How does this all relate to higher education administration? Does the field attract women with certain predispositions who will be achievers and able to climb the organizational hierarchy? Do certain types of people (Holland's premise) fit certain positions within the organization? Can we structure administrative ladders and paths in higher education to take advantage of these shifts and changes?

Over the last 25 years there has been an increase, albeit small, in the number of women in senior-level positions. Fassinger (1985) would argue that this increase is directly related to the increase in women who identify with a feminist perspective. High ability feminists are achievement oriented and would be most likely to seek positions of power, striving for senior-level administrative positions. From a related perspective, Tangri and Jenkins (1986) would argue that these women were influenced by feminist mothers and supportive fathers who encouraged them to be achievers.

How do Harmon's hypotheses relate? Touchton, Shavlick and Davis' (1993) research on women college presidents support her hypotheses. Their research found that 84% of women college presidents did not start their careers in higher education.

These women aspired to senior-level administrative positions in higher education after many years of experience and after returning to graduate school, upholding Harmon's Opportunities Dominance Hypothesis. Since many of these same women started their careers as secondary teachers, more traditional, and then sought senior-level positions in higher education, more nontraditional, Harmon's Socialization Dominance Hypothesis is supported.

Other researchers, such as Mazen and Lemkau (1990), Chusmir (1983), Murrell (1989) and, Nevill and Schlecker (1988), determined that achievers possessed certain personality characteristics and traits. Dovetailing neatly with Harmon's personality typologies and Krumboltz's notion that genetic endowment of traits and characteristics were important to career choice, their research poses the question: Are leaders born or are they developed? Has there always been a population of women who "fit" into the administrative positions in higher education but, because of sex-role stereotyping, were unable to achieve until society began to adopt new attitudes? As a result of this analysis, I would argue that the changes in society's attitudes, in other words, a consequence of socio-historical shifts and forces, is largely responsible for more achieving women being able to "fit" into senior-level administrative positions.

Up to this moment I have considered career development from an organizational perspective and from an individual perspective. The organizational analysis indicates that if a woman chooses to seek a senior-level administrative position, there are certain positions within the hierarchy she must hold, she must take control of her career by participating in professional development activities and she must possess the

appropriate educational credentials to assume a position of leadership. The individual analysis suggests that a woman must make personal choices about work and family, she must be able to reject traditional sex-roles when choosing a career, and she must possess traits and characteristics which empower her to be an achiever.

The missing piece in the analysis is: Who helps women recognize their potential and who encourages them to strive for senior positions? The works of Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) and others clearly indicate that strong role models influence career choice. The next section will examine the function role models and mentors play in the career development of women in higher education.

Role Models and Mentors

Mentors

The philosophy and practice of mentoring has been around for centuries. It was promoted by Confucius as far back as the second century BC. The term "mentor" comes from Homer's Odyssey. King Ulysses' trusted and wise old friend, Mentor, was solicited to groom Telemachus, Ulysses' son, for leadership. Mentor's role was to nurture, protect, and educate Telemachus while Ulysses' was away at war.

In the 1970's scholars began documenting the important role mentoring plays in the psychosocial development and career growth during every transitional stage of human development (Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1978; Luna & Cullen, 1990). As humans transition from one developmental stage to the next, they seek out relationships which enable them to work on issues that concern them at that particular stage. As an

example, young adults may benefit from the support and guidance of a more senior person as they transition from the home to the world of work.

In organizations, success often depends not only on what you know or how hard you work, but on whom you know, and who guides you, encourages you, supports you and advocates for you within the system (Hall & Sandler, 1983). Admission to and advancement through the system is easier when a junior member has the support of a senior member of the organization. There is a rich tradition of literature which suggests that a senior colleague, or mentor, helps the junior colleague, the protégé, establish a professional identity while learning the ropes of organizational life (Dalton, Thompson & Price, 1977; Kram, 1985; Kram, 1986; Levinson, 1978; McNeer, 1983; Moore & Salimbene, 1981; Phillips-Jones, 1982; Reich, 1985; Picker, 1980).

Clearly, organizations benefit when senior, experienced colleagues develop young talent. In higher education, relationships in which a mentor guides a protégé through early stages of career development play a very important role in the development of future organizational leaders and faculty (Johnsrud, 1991; Hall and Sandler, 1983; McNeer, 1983; Moore & Salimbene, 1981; Picker, 1980).

Much of the literature on mentoring has evolved around research on males in business organizations. Levinson (1978) and Reich (1985) have documented the importance of mentoring in developing talented managers and executives. Motivated by these findings and the positive attention given Levinson and his book, feminist scholars began studying the practice of mentoring. Their objective was to establish ways to develop women managers and executives in business and academe. They

found that, despite the paucity of women administrators in senior-level positions in higher education, mentoring plays a vital and important role in the career and adult development of women in this field (Luna & Cullen, 1990). In part, because of this paucity, most mentoring relationships for women in academe were cross-gender.

This raises some interesting questions. As more and more women emerge into positions of leadership and have the opportunity to act as mentors to junior female colleagues, will researchers find that the mentoring of women by women differs from the traditional models defined by men? Can women's mentoring relationships be framed by a male-oriented model? Gender-related differences affect interactions among individuals and determine the structure of social institutions (Clark, 1976; Martin, 1985; Unger & Crawford, 1992) Do these differences transcend mentoring relationships? This section of the review will focus on the literature dealing with traditional mentoring relationships and the more recent literature on women and mentoring in an attempt to determine if there are gendered styles of mentoring.

Traditional Models of Mentoring

Levinson (1978) is credited with defining the mentor-protégé relationship. He suggested that finding a mentor is one of the four main tasks a young man faces in the course of his development through adulthood. Through his study of the adult life cycles of 40 males, he determined that the forming of mentoring relationships was a predictable and important developmental task in early adult years. He described the mentor as both parent and more experienced peer whose efforts and special concerns

pushed the protégé to realize his full potential. The functions Levinson's mentor fulfilled included being a teacher, a sponsor, a host, a guide, a role model, and a counselor.

In a study of male executive mentoring, over 72% of Reich's (1985) respondents felt that mentoring contributed significantly to their career development. According to his respondents, the major functions of mentoring were helping the protégé secure early transfer to more challenging jobs, opening new positions for the protégé, assigning the protégé to special projects, and advising the protégé about company policies. In essence, the mentor was a guide, a sponsor, a coach, and a role model. Respondents felt that the assistance given them by their mentors resulted in more opportunities to develop abilities, more opportunities to be creative, more opportunities to make difficult decisions, and more opportunities to be creative.

Dalton et al. (1977) postulated that in the early stages of his career, the protégé works closely with a mentor learning organizational savvy and the skills not defined in a textbook but learned by observation and trial and error. A good mentor is a model who shows the protégé how the system works and assists the mentor in advancing through the organization.

Clearly, these and other works show that, in business organizations, mentors play a strong role in helping their protégés climb up the organizational ladder. And Levinson's, Dalton's and Reich's models of mentoring are hierarchical in nature, as well. The mentor serves as father to the protégé, the son. The relationship is hierarchical with the mentor viewing his role strictly to develop the protégé. The

relationship is less connected; the mentor is neither friend nor peer, he is above the protégé on the organizational ladder and is a groomer and a developer of the next generation. And as in many father-son relationships, an intense power difference can exist. Both Levinson and Reich found that as the protégés realized their full potential, a conflict between mentor and protégé frequently arose, often leading to a complete breach of the relationship. When the protégé reached an executive position and no longer required the assistance of his mentor, he often completely dissolved the relationship.

Cameron and Blackburn's (1981) research on sponsorship and career academic success found similar results with an interesting twist. Studying the mentoring of science faculty they found that women were more likely to continue their collaboration with their mentor or sponsor even after attaining academic success. Men were less likely, ending the relationship when it was no longer required for career advancement. Their results as well as those of Levinson and Reich reflect the types of relationships, and consequently mentoring relationships, most natural to men. "Consequently, relationships, and particularly issues of dependency, are experienced differently by women and men. For boys and men, separation and individuation are critically tied to gender identity..." (Gilligan, 1982, p. 8).

Thus, the research indicates that men are most comfortable with relationships that can be severed, while women require relationships which are more connected. Therefore, we need to explore styles of mentoring and mentoring functions which reflect the types of relationships which may be more germane to women.

Two Models of Mentoring

While there is agreement among scholars about the benefit of mentoring relationships in organizations, there are differences in the types of relationships and the range of developmental functions provided. In her study of corporate women executives, Phillips (1977) reported that these women described a wide range of mentor types and an equally wide range of ways in which mentors assisted the protégé to develop. Using the protégé's perception of the type of assistance provided by the mentor, she refined the definition of mentoring to include two types, primary and secondary mentors. Primary mentors include traditional mentors or "classic mentors ... who serve as protectors and parent figures for their protégés" (Phillips-Jones, 1982, p. 182). In this category, supportive bosses and organizational sponsors serve as coaches and provide the political support to assist the protégé in the climb up the organizational hierarchy. Phillips (1977)[1] portrayed these primary mentors as "significant other(s) present at critical point(s) of the protégé's life who engage in activities that assist the protégé to define and/or reach his or her life goals" (p. 62).

Phillips-Jones' (1982) secondary mentors were less crucial for career development within the organization but played an important role in the personal development of the protégé. She discovered that many of her respondents identified peer strategizers as those who offered some of the services they expected in a mentoring relationship. They did not open the doors of advancement for their protégés but served as confidants and idea generators. These types of mentors are supportive of

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[1] Phillips and Phillips-Jones are the same person. The name change reflects a change in marital status.

the protégé's goals and decisions. Unsuspecting-hero role models display professional behavior and competence which the protégé may emulate to develop their own sense of professional identity. Phillips-Jones suggested secondary mentors have a less powerful effect on the protégé's progress within the organization but are important nonetheless for the protégé's professional growth and development. It seems that the terms primary and secondary mentor serve as a distraction to understanding the whole of mentoring. As we identify different functions performed by mentors, do we in essence create a mentoring hierarchy with primary playing a more important role than secondary mentoring?

Kram (1985, 1986) defined mentoring and the role of mentors in a much more structured manner. She suggested a systems framework which "considers individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels of analysis" (p. 160). She categorized mentoring functions into two broad categories: career functions and psychosocial functions. Career functions are those aspects of a relationship which serve primarily to aid advancement up the hierarchy of an organization, including sponsorship, coaching, exposure, and assigning the protégé challenging work. Sponsorship opens the doors of advancement to the protégé. Coaching functions teach the protégé the ropes while providing negative and positive feedback on the protégé's performance and potential. Exposure means taking the protégé to important meetings in order to create opportunities for the protégé to demonstrate talent and competence. Delegating special assignments that stretch's the protégé's knowledge and skills challenges the protégé, providing them with the experience required to move ahead. Comparing Kram with

Levinson, Reich and Dalton one finds that men in hierarchical business organizations embrace most of the career functions in their mentoring relationships. Women embrace these functions also but tend to incorporate into their relationships more of the psychosocial functions than men.

Kram (1986) described the psychosocial functions as those which affect the protégé on a more personal level by "enhancing a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role" (p. 162). Those aspects of a mentoring relationship which are psychosocial are role modeling, counseling, friendship, and acceptance and confirmation. Role modeling demonstrates valued behavior. The protégé learns attitudes and skills which may aid them in achieving competence or a professional identity. Counseling serves to provide the protégé with a confidential arena in which the protégé can explore personal and professional dilemmas. Friendship fosters a relationship of intimacy and caring, a sharing of experience outside the daily work environment. And acceptance and confirmation strengthens self-image and self-confidence; on-going support, respect, and affirmation reinforces the protégé's self-worth. These psychosocial mentoring functions require an interpersonal bond which fosters mutual trust and increasing intimacy.

"Since masculinity is defined through separation while femininity is defined through attachment, male gender identity is threatened by intimacy while female gender identity is threatened by separation" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 8). Thus, it seems natural that men would benefit from the career functions of mentoring while women would benefit from the psychosocial functions of mentoring. This also seems to indicate that women

would not benefit from cross-gender mentoring because women require a relationship which fosters mutual trust and increasing intimacy, a type of relationship unnatural to most men.

Women's Career Development and Mentoring

> Role models and mentors give us permission to aspire and to act. We are given permission to be ourselves and to transcend prescribed gender roles. Role models and mentors also inspire us to try and realize our potential. (Astin & Leland, 1991, p. 47)

As women launch careers in higher education administration, a male-dominated profession, they bring with them concerns about professional identity and competence. Since their choice of career runs counter to traditional norms, that is, women are still outnumbered by men two to one in senior-level positions, they may require more personal encouragement and guidance from a mentor. Realizing that much of the literature on mentoring utilizes a male-oriented conceptual framework, feminist scholars questioned whether women's relationships were accurately discerned from male models. Miller suggested that "the parameters of the female's development are not the same as the male's and the same terms do not apply" (in Gilligan, 1982, p. 148).

Taking gender-related processes into consideration, it is not surprising that women's mentoring relationships differ from traditional male models. Traditional social roles reinforce the view of women as helpers; they spring from the socialization of women as nurturers and care-givers (Clark, 1976; Gilligan, 1982; Martin, 1985).

Gilligan (1982) identified a "female voice" in which a woman's sense of self is connected to her relationships. Thus, women may be more likely to bring to the mentoring relationship their values of collaboration, sharing, care, concern, and nurturance (Bolton, 1980; Fauth, 1984; Hall & Sandler, 1983; Johnsrud, 1991; Sheldon, 1990).

Studying the mentoring activity of 14 primary women role models in business and academe, Luna and Cullen (1990) found that "women in academe generally exhibited more nurturing qualities and promoted the psychosocial aspect of mentoring..." (p. 8). Academic women were more sensitive to enhancing the personal development of their protégés. Interview data showed many examples of academic women demonstrating psychosocial mentoring roles including: attending to personal and professional problems, giving advice on personal dilemmas, participating in a long-term friendship, and enhancing the self-esteem of the protégé.

Follon (1983) and Canada (1989) found similar results. Women mentors in academe were more interested in encouraging their protégés to develop their abilities and were more involved in assisting the protégé to develop a positive self-image and positive self-esteem than they were in providing opportunities to enhance career development. It is not surprising that academic women tend to mentor individuals in terms of psychosocial development. Women in academe demonstrate greater concern for individual differences, and greater concern for the social and emotional development of students than men in academe (Fauth, 1984). They are also more

likely to discuss personal matters with students and have more influence on the life decisions of female students (Sheldon, 1990).

Others have found that academic women's mentoring relationships are less directive than men's relationships; they tend to affirm and encourage their protégé to pursue her own personal development (Hall & Sandler, 1983; McNeer, 1983). Women seek relationships which are less hierarchical and more reciprocal in nature (Hall & Sandler, 1983; Sheldon, 1990). Because these relationship are more collaborative, mentors often evolve into friends and this friendship can be just as valuable to career growth and development (McNeer, 1983). Kram (1985) suggested that peer relationships can provide a variety of career functions and psychosocial functions beneficial to the protégé.

Role Models

Role modeling involves a senior person demonstrating for a junior person valued behavior and attitudes. These behaviors and attitudes are emulated by the junior person which in turn, influences their professional growth and identity. The most obvious role models are parents who have a strong influence over their children. The identification with parents and the modeling of parent's various occupational roles is thought to be one of the main components of an individual's career development (Bolton, 1990).

The influence of role models on career development has been the focus of considerable research. Most researchers have concluded that the presence or absence

of role models significantly influences the development of the individual. The presence of role models greatly enhances women's career development (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Bolton, 1980; Douvan, 1976; Gilbert, 1985; Luna & Cullen, 1990; Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1990). Hackett, Esposito & O'Halloran (1989), studied 107 senior college women to test their hypothesis that role model influences are predictive of career-related aspirations and choices. They found that for different aspects of the career choice process, role models significantly influenced the choices made. Strong female teachers, who served as role models, greatly influenced the career choices and educational aspirations of study participants.

On the other hand, the lack of female role models in nontraditional professions and high administrative positions has been identified as a significant barrier to women's career development and has significantly impeded women from pursuing such careers (Douvan, 1976). The lack of role models in nontraditional occupations hinders the development of women's educational and occupational potentials.

More recent research has focused on the importance of various types of role models to the career development of women in nontraditional careers and occupations. Other researchers have suggested that for some women in nontraditional fields, the support and encouragement from a significant male is also an important factor in occupational choice (Astin & Leland, 1991; Crawford, 1978; Eden, 1992; Douvan, 1976; Gilbert, 1985; Lunneborg, 1982). Hackett, Esposito and O'Halloran (1989) examined the perceived influence of female and male role models on the career plans

of college women. They found the positive influence of fathers and other adult males were significant predictors of women considering nontraditional occupations.

Astin and Leland (1991), and Lunneborg (1982) found similar results. Women who choose nontraditional careers generally have strong support from both parents as well as from siblings, teachers, peers, and other adults of both sexes. Parents and families modeled and encouraged them to develop as independent women and affirmed their self-image, enabling them to take the risk and pursue nontraditional occupations. Lunneborg also found that nontraditional women got more support and encouragement from male and female peers than women with more traditional career aspirations.

Role modeling is also considered one of the most important psychosocial functions in mentoring relationships. The mentor/role model demonstrates behaviors which aid the protégé in achieving competence, confidence, sense of self, and a clear professional identity (Kram, 1986).

From the review of the literature one can construe that there are many different types of mentoring relationships encompassing a wide range of activities and that mentoring and role modeling are important to the career development of women. One can also infer that women tend to espouse a style of mentoring which promotes the psychosocial development of their protégés while men tend to promote career development. But, one cannot define the mentoring relationships of all women as such.

Summary

Conventional wisdom has proposed that there is an administrative ladder with clearly defined and tightly ordered positions which describes the administrative hierarchy in higher education. However, research has shown those who successfully climb to senior level positions do not necessarily step on every rung of the ladder. The first and most important rung for most senior administrators in academic affairs is as a member of the faculty. In other words, career paths are fluid to a point, but faculty status is the key predictor for reaching a senior position.

Obtaining the next administrative position differs between four-year and two-year schools. Most senior administrators in four-year colleges and universities come to their position in one of two ways. They are either promoted from within the institution or are nominated for the position by someone within or outside the institution. On the other hand, most senior administrators come to their positions in two-year colleges by direct application, a more grass-roots effort.

The literature has also shown that there are many women in middle management positions in higher education but few at the senior level. Those who are successful work very hard to obtain senior positions. They obtain the appropriate terminal degree, most participate in professional development activities, those in presidencies and senior academic affairs positions start as faculty, and few are ever out of the job market. If they have children, they do not take "time-out" to raise the family.

From the personal perspective, the literature is fraught with theories on career development. The most widely known theories however, do not take into account how

traditional cultural norms and gender-based social roles influence women's occupational choice. More recent theories such as Betz and Fitzgerald's (1985) framework and Harmon's (1989) hypotheses take into account gender-stereotyping and traditional female social roles. Their research and the research of others has shown that successful career women make personal choices about career and family. They are able to reject traditional social roles when choosing a career and most possess traits and characteristics which empower them to be an achiever. Mentoring and role-modeling is also important to successful women; mentors and role models significantly influence the career development of most successful women.

Given this understanding of the literature, it seems appropriate to look at a wide range of women who have achieved senior status in higher education. And given that most senior officers at community colleges come to their positions in a grass-roots manner, through direct application, women who have achieved senior academic officers positions at community colleges are perceived as an interesting group to study. This review has served to focus the research questions around four areas: how these women have approached career decision making; who or what influenced their career choices; what are the characteristics of these achievers; and how traditional gender-based social roles influenced their occupational choices.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction to Naturalistic Inquiry

This study on the career development of women senior academic officers in community colleges uses a qualitative methodology developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) called Naturalistic Inquiry. Naturalistic Inquiry, with its roots in ethnography and phenomenology (Skrtic, 1985), has been labeled post-positivistic, ethnographic, and subjective (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The methodology is rooted in the emergent paradigm; a paradigm which proposes that all aspects of reality are interrelated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), a "whole cloth" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 21). The emergent paradigm makes very different assumptions about reality, objectivity, generalization, causality, and the role of values (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These assumptions have very important implications about how the research is conducted.

This methodology is congruent with the study under discussion. I chose this methodology over quantitative methods because I believe that if "research is the process of trying to gain a better understanding of the complexities of human interactions" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 21) then Naturalistic Inquiry, a methodology recognizing "that there is not a single objective reality but multiple realities" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 21) provides me with the tools and techniques necessary to gain a better understanding of women's career development in higher

education. A naturalistic study maintains the richness of the respondent's story which can be lost when the story is quantified. In a naturalistic inquiry study, language, symbols, and other value-laden objects are analyzed to find meaning in human interaction. Naturalistic inquirers seek to explain, understand, and express complexity in human behavior. Because naturalistic inquirers believe there are multiple realities that are socially constructed and these realities cannot be studied in pieces, but rather, must be studied holistically, the context of the study is taken into consideration. And because Naturalistic Inquiry can get at complexity, meaning, and symbols, it is the method of choice to come to a better understanding of the career development of women to senior academic officer positions in community colleges. A brief explanation of the five assumptions of the emergent paradigm and their relationship to this study illustrates why this methodology is appropriate.

Naturalistic inquirers believe "there are multiple constructed realities that can be studied only holistically" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37). Instead of converging on a single reality, Naturalistic Inquiry studies lead to an awareness of divergent realities (Erlandson et al., 1993; Skrtic, 1985). The constructed realities cannot be studied in pieces, they can only be studied holistically because the pieces are "interrelated in such a way as to influence all other pieces" (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 75). For example, in this study, a stance of accepting multiple realities led to an understanding of the many ways women achieve careers in community colleges.

Naturalistic inquirers believe in order to gain a deep understanding of human activity, the researcher must be fully involved in that activity as well as conduct the

research in a setting where all of the contextual variables are interacting (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Researcher and respondents are interactive and inseparable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The emergent paradigm takes into account the mutual influence researcher and respondents have on each other; the interactive nature of the relationship is recognized and prized. The researcher and the respondents learn from each other and theory is created through human interaction via a dialectic conversation. For this study, all theories and interpretations were negotiated between researcher and respondents.

A third assumption of the emergent paradigm is that the results of a Naturalistic Inquiry study cannot be used to predict or control, they are time and context dependent. "No phenomena can be understood outside of relationship to the time and context that spawned, harbored, and supported it" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 189). Results can be transferred from one similar context to another, but the burden of truth lies with the transferrer (Erlandson, et al., 1993). To most fully understand the research findings, the researcher provides thick description to allow the reader to use the study's insights in another context. For example, Chapter Four of the dissertation contains thick descriptions of each respondent and her career. Thick description enables readers to apply study findings to other contexts.

Fourth, all phenomena observed in a Naturalistic Inquiry are bound together in a whole cloth pattern (Erlandson et al., 1993). Each aspect of reality influences the other in a "mutual simultaneous shaping" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37) so that it is impossible to distinguish between cause and effect. Multiple interacting factors,

events, and processes give shape to human action and are part of it (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). In this study I found that multiple factors and events influence the career development of women. Gender-stereotyping, achievement related conflicts, the nature of the administrative hierarchy, the nature of the community college, and other factors all work together to mutually shape the careers of women in community colleges.

The fifth assumption of the emergent paradigm is Naturalistic Inquiry is value-bound (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher brings to the study all aspects of his or her experience. These experiences influence the way the researcher and respondents view the world and make meaning. In a naturalistic study, the values of both the researcher and the respondent are recognized and acknowledged. Values inform the research setting, the theoretical perspective, and the methodology. It is impossible to ignore or avoid values. In this study, the researcher's values influenced the judgement of the merit or worth of findings and how these findings are expressed in the case studies. The researcher's values also influenced the theory chosen to guide the inquiry. The contextual values (ie., values of the community college) shape how the findings are valued and used.

Thus, the assumptions of the emerging paradigm and the qualitative techniques of Naturalistic Inquiry are congruent with the goal of this study: to better understand how these women achieved their careers and positions as community college senior academic officers. The techniques of the methodology pertaining to research design, data collection and data analysis are described in the remainder of this chapter.

Research Design

Naturalistic Inquiry studies are based on an emergent design. The inquiry takes the form of successful iterations around four elements; purposive sampling, inductive analysis, grounded theory, and the projection of the next steps (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data collection and analysis go hand-in-hand. Thus, it is not completely possible to specify the design elements of a naturalistic inquiry, the design of the study emerges as the study unfolds. This does not mean, however, that none of the elements of the design can be determined before the research begins. The naturalistic inquirer uses several techniques to determine the focus of the inquiry, fit of the methodology to the inquiry, data collection instrument, and the techniques used for analyzing the data.

Boundaries of the Study

In Naturalistic Inquiry, the study is bounded by such aspects as logistics (eg., time), theoretical perspectives (eg., guiding theory), and values of the researcher. Boundaries are guided by the theories developed from the data rather than by a priori theoretical formulations. They are determined mutually by and negotiated between the researcher and the respondents as the data is collected and simultaneously analyzed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Boundaries are always determined within the focus of the study. The boundaries of this study, discussed below, were (a) the research was limited to studying senior women academic officers, (b) the research was limited to six respondents, (c) the respondents were chosen from New England community colleges,

and (d) the researcher's assumptions and values served as an informed place from which to begin the study.

The research was limited to women who serve as senior academic officers in New England community colleges. This boundary was partially guided by my interests and values as well as a dearth of literature about community college academic leaders. As a professional woman developing a career to a senior academic officer position in a community college, this study is of particular importance to me. This study also fills a knowledge void; there is very little scholarship on women in community colleges. This study contributes significantly to the literature on women in higher education and is an important higher education project.

The second boundary defining the study is time. Naturalistic Inquiry is labor intensive. The data collection, analysis of field notes, and the construction of interpretations is an extremely time consuming process. Given the time frame for completion of the dissertation, the research was limited to six respondents.

Respondents were chosen from a geographical areas limited by a reasonable driving distance from the researcher. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and others realized that research can be bounded by financial constraints. Attempting to interview women outside of the New England area would create a financial burden on the researcher. Limiting the study to New England made this study financially feasible; most New England community colleges are located within six driving hours of the researcher.

The intent of Naturalistic Inquiry is to recognize the values and assumptions the researcher brings to the process and the data. Assumptions about who I am, what I

believe I will find, and what I expect to learn from the study all bound the study. My assumptions included the ideas that (a) mentors play a large role in career choice (Astin & Leland, 1991; Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1978; Luna & Cullen, 1990), (b) gender-based social roles influence career choice (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Fassinger, 1985; Harmon 1981, 1989), (c) family obligations influence career mobility (Ironside, 1991), (d) administrative career development for women is a serendipitous process (Ross & Green, 1990), and (e) high achieving women are feminists who reject sex-role stereotyping (Fassinger, 1985; Mazen & Lemkau, 1990; Neville & Schlecker, 1988). These five assumptions emanated from the guiding theory found in the literature on career development of women. These assumptions serve as an informed place from which to start the study.

To keep the study within its boundaries, a data collection instrument that is capable of recognizing the boundaries is the instrument of choice for a Naturalistic Inquiry study.

Human as Instrument

Because Naturalistic Inquiry studies reflect multiple realities, an instrument that is "capable of sorting, recognizing and honoring those realities, [and] capable not only of distinguishing those subtleties of meaning, but of assessing the role of that meaning in shaping behavior" is essential (Lincoln, 1985, p. 142). The human inquirer is that instrument and the primary means of data collection.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified six characteristics of the human as instrument. The human as instrument is responsive; he or she can sense and respond to all personal and environmental cues. The human as instrument is adaptable. The human instrument can expand the borders of the questions brought into the inquiry while keeping the conversation within study boundaries. Humans are the only ones capable of realizing a holistic emphasis; they can consider multiple realities simultaneously and understand how the context of the study shapes behavior and influences reality construction. The human as instrument has the ability to interpret, formulate hypotheses, collect, and process data simultaneously. Opportunities for clarifying and summarizing data and immediately feeding it back to the respondents is an ability unique to the human instrument. And the human as instrument has the ability to explore atypical and idiosyncratic responses and test their validity to achieve a higher understanding, a task virtually impossible for an ordinary instrument.

The techniques of Naturalistic Inquiry, such as interviewing participants and observing social settings, require a human observer (Manning, 1989). As the researcher, I brought to the study an ability to make meaning of the complexities of life as well as the ability to learn from the experience. I listened to each respondent's story and attempted to understand each respondent's reality. My tacit knowledge (ie., that which is known but which cannot be stated), allowed me to build insights and hypotheses from the study (Lincoln, 1985). "Indeed, the human instrument is the *sole instrument* that can build on tacit knowledge" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 198, italics in original). However, in utilizing tacit knowledge to make meaning of the data, the

researcher must step back from the research environment and consider how he or she influences or shapes the research.

Reflexivity

Researchers are part of the social world they study. They bring values and assumptions to the inquiry which influence the way they view the research. The researcher must make his or her values and underlying assumptions explicit and the values of the research setting clear. Reflexivity is the process of acknowledging and evaluating the influence the researcher has on the research. Being reflexive builds an understanding of how the researcher shapes the context, data collected, and interpretations made instead of attempting to eliminate the effects of the researcher (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

Keeping a reflexive journal helps the researcher to stand back and examine the process while being involved in the process. This journal writing provides the context through which to explain how the inquirer viewed the research while keeping the researcher self-conscious about his or her relationship to the setting and evolution of the design and analysis (Bogden & Biklen, 1992). The goal is to understand how the researcher's ideologies and values as well as those of the respondents influence the inquirer, the respondents, and the research findings (Manning, 1989).

Throughout the study, I kept a reflexive journal as part of my methodological journal. This journal helped me to step back and reflect on who I am in an attempt to acknowledge and control the effect I had on the inquiry. In retrospect, I think I had a

very positive influence on the research. Because I am a faculty member at a two-year college, my respondents were very willing to talk with me about issues concerning the community college and their careers within the community college system. We shared a certain familiarity. Because of this familiarity, I felt the respondents trusted me and were willing to share their experiences. One respondent in particular was less verbal than the others but as I reflect on the process, I truly believe she talked with me more openly about her career than she has ever talked with anyone else. Five of the respondents, including the less verbal respondent, stated during the interview that they liked me and felt comfortable talking with me. One was more cautious and I believe that was because we know each other professionally. However, as the interview progressed and it became clearer to her that I was going to respect her anonymity, she spoke more openly.

Items in the journal included: an acknowledgement of my values and how they shaped study design and interpretations; an analysis of how I felt the respondent interacted with me — was she honest and forthright or did she withhold information because we had not built a mutual, trusting relationship; and other thoughts about my relationship to the setting and research.

Data Collection

Data for this study was collected through in-depth interviews and document analysis of each respondent's curriculum vitae. Study participants were chosen using purposive sampling techniques.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling provides the researcher with confidence that they have portrayed the many individual and group realities which exist in a given context (Patton, 1990). It is "intended to maximize the scope and range of information gathered" (Skrtic, 1985, p. 201).

Purposive sampling can be achieved through five different approaches: sampling of extreme or deviant cases; sampling of typical cases; sampling for maximum variation; sampling critical cases; and sampling politically important or sensitive cases (Patton, 1990). In Naturalistic Inquiry, purposive sampling seeks to include as much information as possible within the boundaries of the study. "Maximizing the range of perspectives concomitantly maximizes the ability to take account of local conditions, to take account of local influences, and to trace in situ value patterns from one respondent to the next" (Lincoln, 1985, p. 147).

To select respondents and achieve purposive sampling I relied on previous higher education and career development studies. The literature review of this dissertation revealed two patterns: most academic officers begin their career as faculty (although some come to the position as professional administrators), and direct application and promotion from within are the two most common means of acquiring a senior position. Study participants were chosen from a select group of women who responded to a preliminary questionnaire (see Appendix B). This questionnaire was designed to identify women from different academic disciplines, who began their careers as faculty, were professional administrators (ie., never held a full-time faculty

position), were promoted from within, and came to their current position by direct application.

To achieve purposive sampling, I sampled six subjects who have achieved their current positions through different means. To sample typical cases I chose three women who came to their positions via direct application. For deviant cases, I chose two respondents who were professional administrators and were promoted from within. To achieve maximum variation, I selected respondents from different academic disciplines. For critical cases I selected respondents who came to their current position through direct application, had a degree in education, and appeared to be high achievers. And to assure a politically important case, I found two respondents who were faculty members before pursuing careers as administrators. Through purposive sampling I was able to "cast the net for deliberately opposite, deviant and idiosyncratic, and atypical constructions of the world" (Lincoln, 1985, p. 147). Employing the five different sampling approaches provided the widest possible range of information for inclusion in the thick description.

Entry and Gate Keeping

In this study, a list of potential respondents came from an initial questionnaire sent to every female senior academic officer in New England community colleges. The six women chosen to participate in interviews were contacted by letter asking their participation and then again contacted over the telephone (see Appendix C).

However, access to time with these powerful women executives was not always be possible. Naturalistic Inquirers need to know "who has the power to open up or block access, or who consider themselves and are considered by others to have the authority to grant or refuse access" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 63). Thus, it was very important for me to become familiar with their administrative assistants and other gatekeepers. These assistants are usually the actors who can "deny or extend" (Skrtic, 1985, p. 208) access to the respondents. I became familiar with each respondent's administrative assistant, the gate-keepers, and kept track of their names and phone extensions. All interviews were scheduled through the respondents' administrative assistants unless the respondent was more comfortable setting her own schedule. Once entry was established, the next step in data collection was to interview respondents.

Interviewing

To understand how people make meaning of their experiences, the researcher listens to what they have to say about their experiences. Thus, an interview is a conversation with a purpose (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is "circular in form, cooperative in manner, and constructive in intent, it is an interchange of ideas by those who see themselves not as adversaries but as human beings who come together to talk and listen and learn from one another" (Martin, 1985, p. 10). The process is a dialogue or interplay between inquirer and respondent (Bogden & Biklen, 1992).

Because it is impossible to know at the onset what realities will be important to the respondent, the researcher cannot narrow the focus of the interview through a priori protocols (Manning, 1989). Open-ended questions allow the respondents to answer from their own frame of reference, rather than from structured, prearranged questions (Bogden & Biklen, 1992; Skrtic, 1985). Research questions were chosen not to test a priori hypotheses but rather to get to a discovery of meaning. A series of open-ended questions were developed for this study (see Appendix A). Every attempt was made not to "lead" the respondent to her answers. The questions served as a guide and shifted and changed as the study became more focused.

The first open-ended question, "Tell me about your career," started the conversation. As the respondents answered, I attempted to analyze their responses and develop the next questions. As the interview proceeded and interpretations were made, the questions became more focused. My tacit knowledge (including intuitions, apprehensions, hunches, vibes, or feelings) informed me there was something going on which cannot be clearly articulated at this time. Because of these hunches or vibes, I continued to ask questions which greatly enhanced my understanding.

Second interview questions were based on my interpretations from the first interview. These questions were more focused; I attempted to get at an understanding of what was really going on for each respondent. When the interview ceased to be productive or the information offered by the respondent became redundant, the interview and the data collection terminated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Analysis

The process of analyzing qualitative data can be an overwhelming as well as frightening process (Patton, 1990). It is the responsibility of the researcher to make meaning from reams of data.

> Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to a mass of collected data. It is messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat. Qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationship among categories of data; it builds grounded theory (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 112).

In Naturalistic Inquiry, data analysis is conducted continually and simultaneously with data collection (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Skrtic, 1985). The research entails an inductive, open process such that collection and analysis go hand-in-hand to promote the emergence of grounded theory (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Gardner & Steinmetz, 1991; Erlandson et al., 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Data is collected, tentative working hypotheses emerge from the data, the design is reshaped, the interviews become more focused, and the process begins again in an iterative fashion until the data become redundant (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Analysis involves techniques which facilitate interpretation and the development of working hypotheses and grounded theory.

Unitizing and Categorizing

The first step in data analysis is to break down the field notes into heuristically sound bits — a quote or a phrase that can stand on its own and has meaning in the absence of any additional information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The purpose of extracting these "thinking units" (Ely et al., 1991) is to identify and record essential information units to begin to code the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Skrtic, 1985).

Transcribed interviews and field notes were duplicated and data broken down into units or bits. These units of completely self-explanatory data were recorded onto 3 X 5 cards. Cards from each respondent were clearly marked with their initials or pseudonyms. The page number and line number of these bits from the field notes were also clearly marked on the cards. This process proved to be very important; by separating the data out into heuristically sound bits, I became very familiar with the data. Being aware of the data enhanced case study writing. Frequently, while writing on a theme I would remember a quote that would serve to bolster my interpretations. Because of my intimacy with the data, I was adept at quickly finding important information in the raw field notes.

The cards were then sorted into manageable chunks. The goal of categorizing is to "bring those cards relating to the same context together into a loose taxonomy" (Skrtic, 1985, p. 194). The researcher uses intuition and tacit knowledge to sort the cards into "look-alike" or "feel-alike" piles. The purpose is not sort by "pet" categories or a priori themes (Manning, 1989), rather the process is to allow salient categories to emerge from the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher develops

categories which trigger the construction of a conceptual theme suited to the data (Ely et al., 1991; Erlandson et al., 1993). This process lays the groundwork for establishing the credibility of the inquiry. It is important for the researcher to realize that the construction emerging is but one of the many possible interpretations or constructions of reality.

Multiple iterations during categorizing keeps the researcher true to the data instead of creating categories to fit personal agendas. These multiple sorts prevent the researcher from missing categories salient to the respondents. Employing a constant comparative method forces the researcher to utilize tacit knowledge to build categories, see the data in divergent ways, and construct realities that are consistent and compatible with those realities that have been constructed by the respondents (Erlandson et al., 1993; Manning, 1989). Oftentimes throughout the process I found myself using my assumptions to build categories and themes. By doing multiple sorts I was able to keep the categories and themes fluid, allowing for the accommodation of new ideas as they arose.

I sorted the cards from each respondent separately and used these sort to construct a case study for each respondents. I then gathered all of the cards together and did a large group sort. The purpose of these multiple sorts was to develop common themes and interpretations for all of the data.

Memo Writing

While transcribing field notes, unitizing, and categorizing, promising theoretical ideas often arise. These ideas and thoughts, which reflect what the researcher is thinking, should be written down because they prove to be useful for overall analysis. This memoing, often thought of as "conversations with oneself about what has occurred in the research process" (Ely et al., 1991, p. 80), often leads to interpretation. Analytical memos are not fully developed papers, they are quick notes which assess the progress of the research, identify emergent ideas and theories, and associate the connections between categories (Bogden & Biklen, 1992). They contain the researcher's insights which greatly facilitate the formulation of grounded theory (Manning, 1989).

I developed a style of memoing which fit my style of organization. As I read through field notes and made notations, I used different color inks for different days. This allowed me to continue the conversation with myself and understand how my analysis evolved and changed as I became more familiar with the data.

During data collection I maintained both a methodological and a field journal. The field journal contained notations and comments to myself about the interviews which reflected what I thought was important. These notes assisted in the analysis and interpretation of the transcribed interviews. The methodological journal contained my thoughts and insights into the methodology reflecting on my state of mind, my assumptions, beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions, and prejudices. The influences of all of these items helped me acknowledge the influence I have as the human as instrument.

While unitizing and categorizing I made notations about emerging themes and categories. These notes helped me develop categories, draw out the salient characteristics of categories, and make connections between categories. Memoing also helped in the process of writing the case study. My memos kept me from being descriptively rich yet conceptually thin. Memoing enhanced my ability to develop working hypotheses and grounded theory.

Interpretations and Working Hypotheses

Without interpretation, the inquiry is only a description of the respondents and events in their lives. Interpretations can be thought of as "the researcher's inferred statement that highlights explicit or implied attitudes toward life, behavior, or understandings of a person, persons, or a culture" (Ely et al., 1991, p. 150).

Interpretations serve their purpose when they illuminate the events of the time and history-bound context. Construction of these interpretations are limited by the past experiences of the researcher and respondents, by their ways of making meaning and, by the time and cultural context in which the inquiry took place (Manning, 1989).

The goal of inquiry is to achieve verstehen, an understanding or meaning experienced in a context or situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher analyzes and interprets data into an idiographic body of knowledge best characterized by a series of working hypotheses. These hypotheses identify common themes, initial interpretations, and consequently define further research actions. Working hypotheses do not aim to predict, but rather to describe and explain "the chaotic and indeterminate

aspects of social living" (Manning, 1989, p. 88). Working hypotheses are tentative both for the situation in which they are first uncovered and for other situations and, they are also time and context dependent (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These working hypotheses cannot be transferred from one context to the next, rather, working hypotheses are used to make tentative judgements about similar contexts. Working hypotheses are not used to explain or predict but rather, used to provide insight or understanding of an event or context.

I took great care not to attempt to do a complete analysis all at once. I spent time with the data, interpreted and reinterpreted. The more time I spent with the data, the more comfortable I became with determining what I felt were reasonable interpretations.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is the product of the research. It grows out of the data and gets expressed in the interpretations. The analysis involves taking "constructions gathered from the context and reconstructing them into meaningful wholes" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 333). A conceptual framework emerges as patterns and themes are identified. Grounded theory entails interpretations, conclusions, and explanations derived from the data. It is patterned, open-ended and discovered inductively from the data rather than "expounded a priori" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 206).

Grounded theory is more dense (ie., descriptively rich), more highly integrated (holistic), and fits a wider scope than a priori theory (Manning, 1989). It is relevant to

the context, modifiable, and transcendent. Its transferability depends on contextual factors. It helps the inquirer conceptualize and interpret the respondents' constructs, beliefs, and actions.

> Theory that grows out of the context-embedded data is likely to reflect more vividly the multiple constructions of reality that permeate the context, and to explicate more subtly and take account of value systems that each set of actors — inquirers, respondents, and audiences — bring to the inquiry (Lincoln, 1985, p. 145).

Throughout the collection and analysis process, I used grounded theory to shape the inquiry, decisions, further data collection, and other methodological choices. I shared my emerging theories with my respondents. This member checking helped refine the data collection process as well as uncover the multiple realities constructed by respondents.

Interpretations, working hypotheses and grounded theory are found in the case studies in Chapter Four and summarized in Chapter Five.

Trustworthiness

Naturalistic Inquiry asserts that there are ways to demonstrate the truth value of the research, provide the basis for applying the results of the research, and allow for external judgements to be made about the neutrality of the research findings and consistency of the procedures (Erlandson et al., 1993). The research must convince the reader that the data has value, is worth paying attention to, and worth taking account of (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The term trustworthiness describes a set of criteria used in Naturalistic Inquiry to ensure that the data and ensuing theory and hypotheses are of high quality. Positivist or conventional paradigm researchers use four concepts to reflect the rigor of the research and its truth value; internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. The naturalistic inquirer's concept equivalents are credibility for internal validity, transferability for external validity, dependability for reliability, and confirmability for objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln, 1985).

Credibility

Credibility is the degree of confidence in the value of findings for respondents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Most importantly, it is the compatibility and affirmation of the interpretations constructed by the researcher with the constructed realities that exist in the mind's of those who have supplied the data (Erlandson et al., 1993). Illumination, understanding, and congruences with the ideas and the values of the respondents assures internal validity. The naturalistic inquirer uses five activities to ensure credibility; prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checking.

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation are techniques used to increase the rigor of the study. Appreciation of the context and environment and the acquisition of tacit knowledge is achieved through prolonged engagement and persistent observation. Prolonged engagement is the investment of sufficient time in the research setting and with respondents to "be certain that the context is thoroughly appreciated

and understood" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 302). Prolonged engagement gives the data scope and breadth and helps the researcher come to a better understanding of "what is really going on here."

To "add the dimension of salience to what might otherwise appear to be little more than mindless immersion" the naturalistic inquirer engages in persistent observation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). Sufficient time is spent with the respondents and within the research setting to assure that the context is understood and effects of misinformation are overcome. Persistent observation gives the research depth.

Both prolonged engagement and persistent observation are methodological processes which must be pursued daily. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation allow time to build trust with respondents so they tell their stories and personal histories. These two techniques demonstrate to the respondents that the researcher is completely committed to the study, their confidences will not be used inappropriately, pledges of confidentiality will be honored, and respondents will have input into the inquiry process, interpretations, and theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I felt it was very important to build a trusting relationship with each respondent. Before each interview, I got a copy of the respondent's curriculum vitae and a copy of the college catalogue where she was employed. Before the first interview, I spent time becoming familiar with each respondent and her institution. And before the onset of each interview I spent time with each respondent talking about her college; we talked about programs that were similar to those at the institution in which I teach, and about

programs which I thought were new and innovative. As I reflect back on this process, I believe the time spent before the interview was valuable. These conversations helped to build trust and a degree of familiarity and convinced my respondents that I was committed to the research.

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation keeps the researcher sensitive to tacit knowledge so one can ask questions to amplify understanding (Lincoln, 1985). These techniques help the researcher achieve an understanding of the multiple realities constructed by the respondents. For this study, respondents were asked to participate in two, one-hour interviews. If more time was needed, I negotiated other interviews with the respondents. By allowing flexibility and scheduling interviews of adequate length, I ensured prolonged engagement. During interviews, I paid particular attention to detail and explored details fully to achieve persistent observation.

Peer debriefing keeps the inquirer honest. It is an opportunity for the researcher to step out of the context being studied to probe biases, clarify the basis for interpretations, review perceptions, and test working hypotheses that may be emerging in the researcher's mind with professionals outside of the context who have a general understanding and interest in the nature of the study (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I engaged in peer debriefing with two colleagues. Both were interested and intrigued by the study and sufficiently knowledgeable of the methodology to provide input and critique.

Negative case analysis, the revising of working hypothesis through hindsight, gives the researcher a chance to "revise a hypothesis until it *accounts for all known*

cases without exception" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 309, italics in original). Negative case analysis occurs during data collection and analysis. Working hypotheses were shared with the respondents for their critique and input. Their comments were used to expand or alter the hypotheses and develop new hypotheses. One respondent asked me to remove a quote that I used in the case study. She acknowledged that she had made the statement, but she did not wish it to be part of the case study. So instead of using the quote directly, I used the quote to make an interpretation with which she felt more comfortable.

Member checking builds credibility into the data. Through member checking, the researcher is adequately able to represent the multiple realities of the context. In the initial contact with my study respondents I explained to them that they would be responsible for checking the transcripts of their interviews and contributing directly to the making of working hypotheses and interpretations. I shared field notes, working hypotheses, and interpretations and through member checking of these documents, negotiated theory. The process of member checking also contributed to building a trusting relationship with each respondent. One respondent expressed how me enjoyed the opportunity to edit the case study and to discuss interpretations. This process made her feel more committed to her role in the research process.

Transferability

The trustworthiness and external validity of an inquiry is judged in terms of the extent in which its findings can be applied in other contexts or with other respondents

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The naturalistic inquirer attempts to describe in great detail the intricacies of the context being studied. The transferability between contexts may occur because of shared characteristics between the sending and receiving contexts (Erlandson et al., 1993). The burden of truth or external validity lies with the persons attempting to make the application of the findings to the receiving context.

The naturalistic inquirer provides a thick description of the research. This thick description enables observers of other similar contexts to make tentative judgements about the applicability of certain observations to their contexts (Erlandson et al., 1993). Chapter Four of the dissertation contains case studies which richly describe each of the study participants and the development of their careers to senior academic positions. The thick description begins with an introduction to each respondent on a personal level and continues with an analysis of her career path including interpretations and hypotheses. This thick description allows readers to determine if the contexts are similar enough to apply the findings to another context.

Purposive sampling provides the researcher with the confidence that they have portrayed as many of the individual and group realities as exist in any given context (Patton, 1990). Because the literature review of the dissertation showed that most academic officers started their careers as faculty (although some come to the position as professional administrators) and that direct application and promotion are the two most common means of coming to a senior position, I selected six subjects utilizing purposive sampling. This provided the widest possible range of information for inclusion in the thick description.

Dependability

Dependability addresses the issues of reliability, consistency, and predictability. This is assured through a dependability audit and the maintenance of an audit trail. An audit trail is examined by an external auditor to "determine whether the research process falls within the domain of acceptable professional practice" (Skrtic, 1985, p. 201). The dependability audit checks for the appropriateness of methodological decisions and biases of the inquirer while ensuring that if the research were replicated with the same or similar respondents, the findings would be repeated or consistent (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

A comprehensive audit trail was maintained throughout the research process. The tape recordings of interviews and the transcripts of the interviews were stored in a file cabinet. All field notes were page numbered and line numbered for easy reference. All discussions with respondents about working hypotheses and theory were recorded and kept with the field notes. And a methodological journal was maintained.

Noted throughout the case studies in the first draft of Chapter Four were bracketed page numbers and line numbers which referred to data found in the field notes (these bracketed numbers were removed before publication of the dissertation with a separate draft retained in my file cabinet). These references allow an auditor to check the reliability of the data and the consistency with which it is reported.

Confirmability

An inquiry is judged in terms of the degree in which the findings are the product of the focus of the study and not of the biases of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The appropriate representation of the data in the case study is assured by a confirmability audit. This audit is conducted by inquiry respondents to "check for groundedness of findings, logic of inferences, utility of category structure, degree of evident inquirer bias, and the nature of accommodation" (Skrtic, 1985, p. 204). I sent draft case studies and interpretations to each of the study participants. They confirmed the data and ensured that the observations were free from researcher contamination.

Authenticity

Trustworthiness alone is not a sufficient measure of quality in a Naturalistic Inquiry (Erlandson et al., 1993). Trustworthiness ensures methodological safe guards which parallel those in traditional research methodologies. However, in a naturalistic study, multiple realities constructed by different respondents are recognized and awarded status in the research. Authenticity is a series of processes, concepts, and techniques which ensure the faithfulness of the research and awards status to these multiple constructed realities (Manning, 1989). There are five authenticity criteria in a naturalistic study: fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity.

Fairness ensures that the research adequately represents the multiple constructions of the context. The role of the researcher is to "seek out, and

communicate all such constructions" and to explicate the different value systems and different points of view (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 246). Fairness ensures that the respondent and their constructions are respected and represented. To maintain fairness and balance between researcher and respondents, an informed consent was reviewed before the research began and again throughout the research process. All field notes, working hypotheses, and case studies were reviewed by the respondents.

Ontological authenticity enables the researcher and respondents to improve the ways in which they view the world around them (Erlandson et al., 1993). This criterion results in a raised consciousness and more informed view of the self. Through open-ended interviewing, a trusting and caring relationship, and dialectic conversations with respondents around data collection and analysis, the researcher achieves the ontological authenticity criteria. One respondent expressed how much she enjoyed reading the case study on her career. She felt she learned something about herself in the process. Be reading the case study, she became more of her own quirks and idiosyncrasies. And she felt it was a good experience to see herself from a remove.

If the research leads to an increased understanding of the multiple constructions expressed by the respondents, educative authenticity takes place. By making the case study accessible to the respondents and by collaborating in the construction of working hypotheses and interpretation, the researcher met this criterion.

Catalytic authenticity is demonstrated when the research facilitates and stimulates action. Activities to ensure catalytic authenticity are research/researcher

collaboration, member checking of the case study, case study accessibility, and practical use of the case study by others in the project. One goal of this study is that aspiring woman professionals get a better understanding of the career development to senior positions. Meeting this goal demonstrates catalytic authenticity.

The goal of tactical authenticity is empowerment. This criteria is met if research participants take actions which "impact on the shape and future of the social context in which they operate (Erlandson et al., 1993). Activities to achieve tactical authenticity included member checking, confidentiality, dialectic conversations, and negotiating for use of data and outcomes.

Case Study Reporting

The analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of the data into assertions are presented in the case study. Described as a "snapshot of reality", a "slice of life", or an "episode", the function of the case study is to improve the reader's understanding of the problem and the context of the inquiry (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through the case study, the inquirer communicates the multiple realities constructed by respondents. As a research tool, the case study improves the level of understanding of the reader, permits the reader to build on her or his tacit knowledge, provides thick description so the reader can judge the transferability of findings between sending and receiving contexts, demonstrates the interplay between inquirer and respondents, and fixes the reader in the context of the study to experience a sense of deja vu (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Manning, 1989).

The case study is co-constructed between researcher and respondents and represents a discussion of the outcomes (working hypotheses) of the inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The inquirer writes what has been seen and heard in a manner that makes as much sense to the reader as it does to the inquirer (Skrtic, 1985). The style of presentation is novelistic including quotations from respondents, thick descriptions of the respondents and the context, and a portrayal of the inquirer as storyteller (Manning, 1989; Skrtic, 1985). Through the use of good narrative, a well written case study "can trace the roots of behavior, can recreate the compulsions, and can unravel the complex tangles of human interactions" (Lincoln, 1985, p. 150). By writing each case study in a novelistic manner, I essentially allowed each respondent to tell her own story.

Chapter Four of the dissertation contains case studies on each of the six respondents. Each case study begins with a thick description of the respondent and continues with a thick description of her experiences. Organized thematically, the case studies effectively communicates to the reader the multiple realities constructed by the respondents. Direct quotations reveal to the reader "the depth of emotion, the ways they [the respondents] have organized their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions" (Patton, 1990, p. 24). All case studies were member checked by the respondents and read and critiqued by the grand member checker.

Summary

This chapter contains an explanation of the qualitative method used in this study, Naturalistic Inquiry. Clearly explicated are the methods and techniques used in Naturalistic Inquiry and how these methods and techniques used in this study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Before study participants were interviewed, an analysis of the senior level administrative positions in New England Community Colleges was conducted, using the *1994 Higher Education Directory* as a reference. At the 45 public, two-year colleges, 11 of the presidents were female, two of those serving in either acting or interim positions (see Table 2). Forty-three of the colleges listed senior academic officers (two were either vacant or not specified). At those 43 schools, 12 of the senior academic officers (SAO) were women (one was serving as Acting Academic Dean). Of those 12 female SAOs, four were at colleges with female presidents. Forty-two schools identified senior student support affairs officers (SSAO); 20 of these were women. And 39 of the schools identified senior financial officers (SFO). Only nine of the 39 senior financial officers were women.

A closer looked showed that 12 of these schools were split 50/50, two female senior officers, two male senior officers. Nine colleges had an entirely male senior staff. Women held the majority of the senior officers positions (i.e., three of the four senior officers were women) at only three schools.

To choose study participants from the 12 senior academic officers, an initial survey was sent to each woman. Eleven of the 12 responded (see Table 3). Eight of those women possessed a doctorate degree: six in Higher Education, one in Management, and the other in American Civilization. Eight had been faculty members

Table 2
Locations of Female Senior Officers
in New England Community Colleges

INSTITUTION	PRES	SAO	SSAO	SFO
ACTC	M	M	M	M
CCTC	M	F	F	M
GCTC	M	F	F	M
HCTC	M	M	M	M
MCTC	M	F	M	M
MXCTC	F	M	M	M
NVCTC	M	M	F	M
NWCTC	F	M	M	M
NCTC	M	M	F	M
QCTC	F	F	M	F
TRCTC	M	M	F	M
TCTC	F	M	M	F
NTC - B	M	M	F	?
NTC - C	M	M	F	F
NTC - L	M	V	?	?
NTC - M	M	M	M	F
NTC - N	M	F	M	?
NTC - S	F	F	F	?
NHT	M	M	M	?
CCRI	M	M	M	M
VTC	M	M	M	M
CCV	*	F	F	M
CMTC	M	M	F	M
EMTC	*	F	M	F
KVTC	F	M	M	M
NMTC	M	M	M	M
SMTC	M	M	M	M
WCTC	M	?	?	?
UMA	M	M	F	F
BKCC	F	F	M	M
BCC	F	M	M	M
BHCC	M	F	F	M
CCCC	M	M	M	M
GCC	M	M	F	F
QC	F	M	F	M
HCC	M	M	M	F
MBCC	M	M	F	M
MCC	M	M	F	M
MCC	F	M	F	M
MWCC	M	M	F	M
NSCC	M	M	F	M
NECC	M	M	M	M
QCC	M	M	F	M
RCC	F	M	F	M
STCC	M	M	M	F
QC	M	F	M	M
TOTAL FEMALES	11/45	12/43	20/42	9/39
PERCENTAGE	.24	.28	.48	.23

* Acting ? Not-Specified V Vacant Position
PRES: President SAO: Senior Academic Officer
SSAO: Senior Student Affairs Officer SFO: Senior Financial Officer

Table 3
Preliminary Survey Results:
Eleven Respondents

PROFESSIONAL ATTRIBUTES		
Doctorate	8	
Education		6
Management		1
American Civilization		1
Masters	3	
Writing		1
Education		2
Faculty	8	
LENGTH OF SERVICE		
Years in Higher Education		
Average		20 years
Longest		30 years
Shortest		11 years
Years in Senior Position		
Average		4 years
Longest		8.5 years
Shortest		0.5 years

before becoming administrators. Three of the eight faculty members had held the rank of full professor. The average number of years in higher education was 20; the longest tenure was 30 years, and the shortest was 11 years.

In terms of length of time in senior positions, the average number of years as a senior officer was four years. The longest period in a senior level position was 8.5 years, and the shortest period was 0.5 years. Six of the 11 respondents were promoted to the senior academic officer position from within the institution. The other five became senior officers by direct application to a posted position.

These factors were used to choose study respondents. Purposive sampling techniques were used to identify six respondents who represented the widest possible range of variation (see Table 4). The remainder of this chapter is composed of case studies presenting each of the six respondents' career development. Telling the stories of these achievers makes the transition from the scholarship on career growth and development to an exploration of career growth from the personal perspective.

All of the case studies are told using the respondents' words and descriptions. Each study begins with a thick description of the respondent, followed by an analysis of her climb up the administrative ladder. The remainder of the case study reveals themes grounded in the data. These themes reflect what I believe to be important to each respondent in terms of her career growth and development. Each study concludes by tying all of the pieces together — or gathering the strands into a whole cloth. The identity of each respondent, all other important characters, and the respondents' places of employment have been protected by the use of pseudonyms.

Table 4
Preliminary Survey Results:
Six Study Respondents

PROFESSIONAL ATTRIBUTES			
	Doctorate	5	
		Education	4
		Management	1
	Masters	1	
		Writing	1
	Faculty	3	

LENGTH OF SERVICE			
	Years in Higher Education		
		Average	20 years
		Longest	30 years
		Shortest	11 years
	Years in Senior Position		
		Average	3 years
		Longest	6 years
		Shortest	0.5 years

Midge

Midge is the Dean of Academic Affairs at Sand Hill Community College. A strong, athletic woman, her self-confidence and ability to walk and stand tall belies her short stature. She is a very talkative women and is very easy to be with. She describes herself as being very shy saying, "I think I'm very shy underneath it all." And she characterizes herself as an introvert, "a capital I on the Meyers-Briggs." However, beneath this shy exterior is a very aggressive, take charge women who likes to be in control and who takes her job very seriously. She is aggressive both personally and professionally. She likes to be challenged and thrives on problem solving. Because she is soft spoken, many people do not see the drive within her — the drive to succeed.

Early in her career, Midge lacked self-confidence and was a victim of what is known as the Imposter Phenomenon; a phenomenon common among high achieving women and first generation professionals. "Imposters believe that they are intellectual frauds who have attained success because they [are] in the right place at the right time ... never because they [are] talented or intelligent or deserve their positions" (Clance, 1985, p. 5). Midge was very conscious of how people perceived her personal performance. She often questioned whether or not she really should be in an administrative position of power: "When those questions about — oh my God, they are really going to find out that I really shouldn't be doing what I'm doing someday. When those questions come up — Are you legitimate and is it valid for you to be here? I think women have trouble with that." But as her career blossomed and she grew professionally, she outgrew the Imposter Phenomenon and her self-confidence

flourished. She now speaks confidently, takes great pride in her accomplishments, and is not afraid to brag about them. "I knew that I had the opportunity to have a tremendous impact on this place [Sand Hill CC], and I have. I mean, not to be pompous about it, but I have. And it's been a great trip."

Although she is quite talkative, candid, and honest, Midge is also a good listener. This is one of her strengths. Being a good listener and a good communicator has made her effective as an academic dean. "I talk pretty well, but I listen well and that has gotten me to where I am now. If you listen and if you ask advice and if you are honest and sincere in your approach with people, they'll help you do this impossible job that you've got."

Another of her strengths is that Midge has the ability to compartmentalize to, "put this problem here, go on to the next thing, and not think about this or deal with it right now." This is a characteristic that contributed to her success. Often times trivial things that happen within the institution bother her. However, this ability to compartmentalize one issue and concentrate on another helps her to keep organized and keeps her from feeling overly stressed.

A marathon runner, Midge never participated in organized sports as a child; those opportunities were not available for girls. "When I was a kid, my brother and I grew up in a neighborhood mostly with boys. I had nobody else to play with, so I played with the boys. I used to play hockey with them and baseball and got quite proficient in all of that." Her training as a runner and an athlete have disciplined her, focused her, and helped to build her self-confidence and drive.

Midge is quite clear that her relationship with her father is very important to who she is today. She was not aware of this until she went to graduate school and had the opportunity to read about gender issues. She read Gilligan, Henning and Jardim, and Belenchy, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule; she became aware of the socialization of women and how their relationships with their parents shaped their development. Because of her experiences with these writings, she can clearly articulate that she is able to succeed and is strong-willed because her father raised her not as a "frilly little girl," but as a strong and independent woman. Her father talked to her, not at her. "My father did not treat me as a china doll. My father was very concerned about my having a sense of being able to take care of myself in this world of ours. And he never talked to me like I would expect a girl to be talked to by a father." However, this strong relationship with her father could not keep her from feeling like an imposter or from being insecure as a young woman. Gender was an issue. The traditional socialization of women into gender-based social roles did shape some of the decisions Midge made early in her career. But as she grew personally and professionally, the lessons she learned from her father strengthened her resolve and helped her to overcome or break free of society's attitudes regarding the role of women in the public domain.

Midge is very committed to her institution and has spent 27 years in higher education at Sand Hill Community College. "My experiences are limited to this institution. I love this institution." She is also very committed to her role as the academic dean, although she does aspire to a college presidency and is actively

pursuing those opportunities. Midge thinks she would make a good college president because "I have some interesting and valuable things [skills] to offer an institution." Most importantly, Midge sees herself as a role model and a path breaker for young women professionals aspiring to careers in higher education or other nontraditional professions.

> I think that the fact that I am a woman, number one, in an institution that is 70% female, I'm a role model for these women. That I am a single-parent, I haven't been that for long, but I have two children in college that I support. That's another of it. I think that I have the ability to show people that you can do this if you want to do this. That you can survive in a male-dominated profession and not prostitute yourself into becoming a male clone. That you can still be a woman and act like a woman, and dress like one, and get your point across.

Midge's Career Path

Midge spent her entire career in higher education at one institution, Sand Hill Community College. Her first job after finishing nursing school was as a secondary school nursing instructor at the vocational high school located in the same district as the community college. She chose teaching over clinical nursing because of the hours; they were more conducive to raising a family than the off-shift hours she would have to work as a clinical nurse. After one year of teaching, her first son was born and she took a career stop-out. When she was ready to return to work, she took a part-time faculty position at Sand Hill Community College. For the next 18 years, Midge served as a faculty member in allied health, a vocation traditionally seen as a women's profession. She served as department chair for one year and then moved into academic

administration (see Figure 4). Figure 4 shows Midge's age corresponding to the number of years spent in each professional position.

The decision to move from clinical supervision, teaching, and interaction with students into administration was a very difficult decision for Midge, but it was a very conscious choice.

> The greater part of the decision however was that I thought that I had something to offer as far as changing what this institution did with health care programs. And the only way that was going to come to fruition was to become an administrator of sorts and to try out these ideas that I had that were nontraditional ideas. And I was lucky that I had an administration that was willing to support some of those ideas.

When Midge made the decision to move from the faculty to academic administration, the college was undergoing a period of growth and transition. In terms of institutional programming, the allied health division was growing and quickly becoming the heart and soul of the institution. The growth of this division was in direct response to community needs. The president of the college had his thumb on the pulse of the community and was committed to establishing an institution that responded to the community. "We read the marketplace out there and did very well. We were extremely effective implementing innovative ideas that people had." The president had also worked successfully to influence the institutional culture. Through his leadership, he created an environment that was supportive and caring, making certain that the mission of the college was clear: "The mission very clearly was to provide opportunities to individuals; to give them quality education and to give them

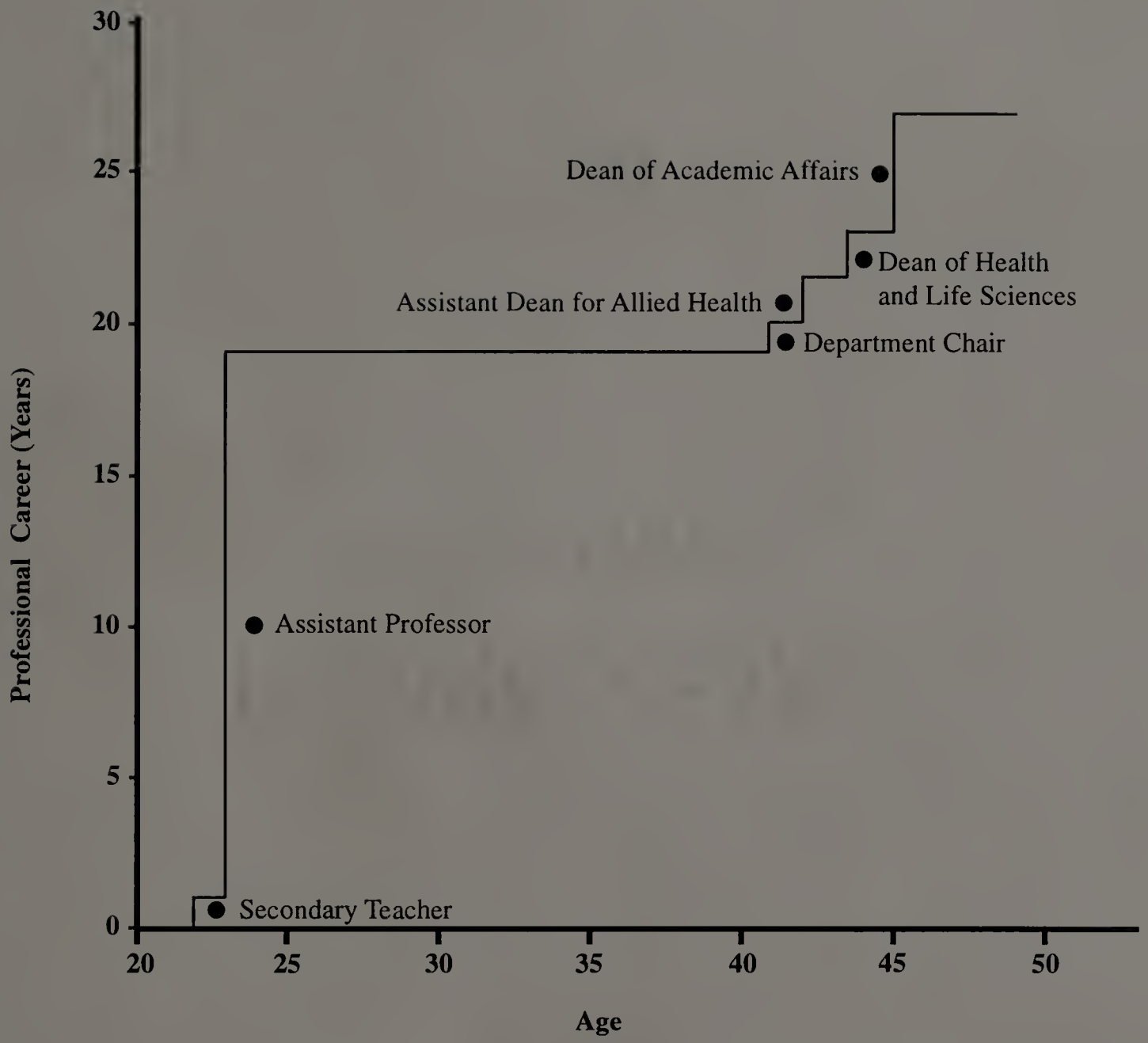

Figure 4
Midge's Career Path

educational support, both from the developmental level as well as the personal support level."

Midge was a key member of the academic administration working to transform Sand Hill and was directly responsible for building the allied health division. As department chair, she implemented one of the first advanced placement programs in New England for Practical Nurses who wanted to become Registered Nurses. As Assistant Dean for Allied Health, she facilitated and conducted a successful accreditation visit for one of the division's programs. As Associate Dean, she established the first School of Allied Health among New England community colleges. She was largely responsible for the growth of the School of Allied Health. In four years, Midge moved from Department Chair to Dean of Academic Affairs, accomplishing many firsts as she moved up the administrative ladder. Midge does not like to think of herself as a workaholic, yet she is very goal-oriented. She is a change-agent who likes to take charge and bring projects to fruition.

Building an Administrative Career

At first glance, it seems that Midge's career has been filled with great accomplishments and that the path to the deanship has been smooth, with very few bumps and bruises along the way. However, that has not been the case. Midge had to overcome many barriers, both personal and professional, and made some very tough decisions and sacrifices to achieve the academic deanship.

Surmounting a Potential Professional Barrier

Midge has a baccalaureate in nursing. She chose nursing, a traditional women's career, for a couple of reasons, the first being purely financial. Midge is a first generation college graduate from a working-class family. Her father encouraged her to choose nursing because it was a career in which she could always be employed and could be self-supporting if necessary. "So my father said to me, you know, you take nursing, it's a safe profession. You'll always be able to get a job. You will always be able to work if something happens. You marry and something happens, you can always put food on the table." Like most working-class men in the 1960s, Midge's father did not ponder his daughter becoming an engineer or a doctor — two other safe professions. This is not to say that he was deliberately treating her with less respect because she was a woman. It was indicative of how society viewed the role of women. Sex-role stereotyping and the male-centeredness of working class culture oftentimes shaped working-class women's life choices, including that of career. Her father wanted her to be employable and independent. As a nurse, she could be both.

The sex-role stereotyping pervasive in the 1960s also influenced women's career choices. Options for women were very limited; women chose to study either nursing, social work, or elementary and secondary teaching. The doors to occupations considered nontraditional for women had not yet started to open. Thus, Midge chose nursing. And nursing proved to be a good initial career choice for Midge; she excelled as a nursing student and excelled as a faculty member in nursing.

This choice, however, became a barrier when Midge decided to pursue a career in higher education administration. Even though much has changed since the 1960s, nursing is still viewed by many in higher education as a traditional women's career and a vocational occupation. Most senior academic administrators have degrees in more traditional academic disciplines, and many academics do not consider nursing an academic discipline. "I have found in my career that people, academic people, view nursing as less than English or history or whatever." As a result, Midge had to work hard to prove herself, both as an academic and as an administrator. "I am very conscious of the fact that I have to prove myself a little more than someone else has to. That I do have academic skills, not just nursing skills. And that I had to win this liberal arts faculty over to that even though they knew me over the years." Even today as she pursues a presidency, her background in nursing is a hinderance. Although she served nine years as an academic administrator, her first career choice, a traditional woman's career, poses a barrier. "I think that now as I apply for jobs, my sense is that that's [the nursing degree] holding me back in a number of different places that I've applied. My undergraduate preparation, oddly enough, [is holding me back]."

Gaining a Diversity of Experience to Prepare for the Next Step

Although it was apparent to Midge that she needed to diversify to prove herself academically, Midge also is someone who likes to broaden her knowledge base. She likes to have her finger in all of the pieces of the pie and to learn as much as possible from each experience. Once she made the decision to pursue an academic

administrative career, she knew that each experience prepared her for the next step. So she applied for positions where she would learn new skills and sat on special committees to diversify her knowledge. "I got a flavor for how the business side of how a college runs, from the organizational development to financial affairs and developing a budget. All of those things that I had not had exposure to before. I thought, well let's see on the second level what that's like and if I can handle all that." Being successful in middle management positions proved that she was capable of being successful at the senior level.

Even though Midge built her career within one institution, the climb to the senior level was not easy. She had to apply and go through the search process for every position except for the Dean of Academic Affairs. Each position prepared her for the next one.

> I've grown into every step.... The only one I didn't go through a formal search for, interestingly enough, was the Dean of Academic Affairs as a consolidated [position]. And that's because I had already gone through the searches for all of the positions leading up to it. And at that point in time, I was appointed by the President because I was the only logical choice.

She worked very hard to prove herself as an academic and as an academic leader. Because her experiences were varied and rich, she successfully competed in each search.

Midge used and continues to use another strategy to prepare herself for the next step. She takes the time to analyze situations and to learn from them. She watches the

current president and wonders whether she would have made the same decision or would have acted differently. "I watch her style and how she interacts with people and how she conducts her business. It's the best learning experience because you sit back and you watch and you think." As she prepares herself for a presidency, she continues to employ this strategy.

Help Along the Way

Her first and only real mentor, a male, played a very significant role in her career growth. He affirmed her potential and encouraged her to strive for more. He pushed her to get a doctorate, explaining to her that she had to have it to climb to a senior level position. He would bring her into his office and tell her what he thought was the next most important thing for her to do for her career: "Listen, I think you have the potential to move along in this business. But you have to get your union card and that union card is the doctorate." His influence was very significant. He pushed her and encouraged her to finish her degree even when the she was going through the trauma of a divorce and her enthusiasm was waning. He urged her to stretch herself to prepare for the next step. "He was very forceful in pushing me, and pushing me, and pushing me to finish the doctorate."

He was also the first person to tell her that she could be an academic dean and to affirm for her that she had the potential to move up the administrative ladder. He helped pave a path for her. He persuaded her to apply for positions within the institution and made certain that she went through the search process where each time

she was chosen by the search committee. These experiences were very important to her career development; they bolstered her self-confidence. "He used to say to me that it was important that we did it this way because he did not want it to be perceived as that he was just giving me these jobs for whatever reasons." Every experience was a learning experience and via her success in national searches, she proved she was a viable candidate.

Midge learned two very valuable lessons from her mentor. The first is that it is important to reach out to other people when you need assistance and advice. "You absolutely can't do it alone. You've got to have some strong supporters behind you, and sometimes, they're your cheerleaders." Second, she recognizes her responsibility to identify and encourage others with potential. "I feel very strongly that I had someone that mentored me. And I think that it's my obligation to pass that on to some of the women that are here and help them."

Education and Life-Long Learning

Obtaining the Union Card

Midge recognized that education was the key to success and the doctorate was the "union card" necessary to achieve a senior administrative position. Her second degree is a Masters in Health Education. She consciously chose Health Education because she knew a degree in another field would provide her with more flexibility and provide her with a broader range of knowledge than a degree in nursing. She recognized that she needed to change how the faculty in the academic programs

perceived her. She needed to prove that she was capable of doing something more than just nursing, that she could be more "academic."

But the masters degree was not enough. Midge needed the "union card" (the doctorate) to move to a senior academic administrative position. She needed to diversify her knowledge base. She was also quite aware that she needed to prove herself as an academic. The President of Sand Hill at that time made it very clear to Midge that she would not be successful without the doctorate. "I started the School of Allied Health and at that time the President would not call me Dean without a doctorate. That was his carrot. So they called me Vice-Dean for awhile." That President, whom Midge considers her most important mentor, affirmed for her what she already knew — if she was going to be successful as a senior administrator, she needed to complete a doctorate degree. While serving as Assistant Dean for Allied Health, she enrolled part-time in a doctoral program. In 1993, after years of part-time study, Midge was awarded an Ed.D. in Higher Education, Policy, Research, and Administration.

The doctorate, however, was more than just a union card. As a graduate student in Higher Education, Midge learned to look at higher education through wider lenses. Her experience in higher education was limited to Sand Hill Community College, one small microcosm of American higher educational institutions. Her doctoral studies helped her to see the bigger picture. She started to grow as a higher education professional. She wrote position papers and gave presentations on issues affecting higher education as a whole, not just those affecting Sand Hill Community

College. Midge became an academic — the missing piece in her educational background. She moved from being just a nursing faculty member to a well-respected academic administrator.

Obtaining the doctorate was not easy for Midge. She had to make demands on many people in her personal and professional life. First, she had to make demands on the people at Sand Hill. They were very supportive; the president understood that when she left campus at 4:30, she was leaving to take classes. Then she had to make demands on her dissertation committee, telling them that they had to understand that she was a professional and needed to do things in a manner that coordinated with her professional obligations. Finally, she had to make demands on her husband who chose not to meet them. Midge's marriage dissolved while she was completing her doctorate. Her growth professionally and personally contributed to the demise of her marriage.

Actively Pursuing Professional Development

The most significant professional development experience for Midge was attending HERS, the Institute for Leadership Development at Bryn Mawr College. She attended HERS because she knew it would help her grow professionally, and she knew it was an opportunity to network with other women leaders in higher education. "To talk to all of the wonderful faculty members that they had, knowing that they had not only a professional but a personal interest in you, that they would help you create a map [career map], and they would be a network point and all that other good stuff." What was most significant about this experience in terms of career development was

that she was willing to pay out of her own pocket for this professional development. It was time to build a career and Midge was willing to sacrifice monetarily to attain her career goal.

Midge participates in other professional development activities. She has attended workshops at organizations like the Association of Governing Boards, American Association of Community Colleges, and Combase. And because money is tight at her institution, she developed a strategy that allows her to attend conferences. She submits proposals for presentation knowing that if they are accepted, her institution will have to pay for her to attend. "Sometimes, for instance, if I present at a conference I would get to go. I presented so they [the institution] would have to reimburse me for the plane fare. They would do it because they'd get some publicity for the institution." She continues to learn in order to enhance her professional development.

Balancing Personal and Professional Life

Midge developed her higher education career in one institution. This was clearly a choice which fit her personal life. She married shortly after completing her baccalaureate degree and started raising a family almost immediately. She initially chose teaching over clinical work because of flexibility issues; if she became a clinical nurse, chances were she would have had to work off-shift. Choosing teaching proved to be very conducive to raising a family; she taught part-time while her children were young. And because of societal attitudes and workplace regulations in the late 1960s

and early 70s, she was forced into a career stop-out after her first child was born. However, Midge does not consider this stop-out or this decision to work part-time a career sacrifice. For her, it was clearly a personal choice. She wanted to be married; she wanted to raise a family. She put her career on hold in order to fulfill the family obligations she had chosen. "So it all sounds like a plan that was kind of not well defined. But as I think back it really was the right decision for me to do classroom and clinical while my children were growing. It was very conscious." As her children grew older, she returned to teaching full-time. It was time for her to do more for herself, her time had come.

Midge also chose to stay in one institution to build her career because, "my husband absolutely would not have moved with me." Again, traditional gender roles were the issue; the male was the breadwinner, and the woman worked her career around her husband's career. However, Midge does not consider this a sacrifice; this was a personal choice. Her marriage and family were very important to her. She was willing to build her career around husband and family. Sadly, however, her husband was not willing to accept her dual roles.

Making Personal Sacrifices for Career

Often in higher education, we think that the structure of institutions serves as a barrier for women in higher education. For Midge, gender was a barrier — not in terms of institutional structure and hierarchy but more in terms of internal and external socialization. Her marriage proved to be a barrier when she was trying to complete

her doctorate and move up the administrative ladder. Midge identified two issues that led to her divorce. First, she was changing as a woman and was reevaluating how she perceived her role as wife and mother. "Part of what I had grown into was part of the reason that it [the marriage] ended because I became more independent and I became much more goal-oriented than I had been in the past. I was less active in my roles as a wife and that was just an issue that my husband couldn't deal with." The second reason was that she was growing professionally, and her husband felt stagnant professionally. Faced with the fact that his wife was growing and he could not determine how to grow with her, he tried to get in the way of her growth. "We talked about it and we talked about the fact that I was growing and [that] he was unhappy in his work and he was not thrilled. We talked about how he could change that, what he could do and how I could support him to do that. That didn't quite work. And the roadblocks continued." Through this experience, Midge came to realize and understand how traditional social roles and sex-role stereotyping had influenced her life and her career. "I didn't consider myself to be a victim of traditional gender roles. I thought that I was relatively independent, but I really wasn't. And I think as I grew and changed, I reexamined what those gender roles were."

Gender influenced Midge's life and career decisions in another manner. As a young women, she could not see herself as being anything other than a wife and mother — her traditional role as a woman. "I didn't perceive myself as being much more than a wife with a nice job and the mother of these kids." Even looking back at her life, she could not imagine herself toying with the idea of a presidency. "I think

it's very interesting to look back. If you ever told me 20 years ago, 10 years ago that I would be sitting where I'm sitting now in the condition that I'm sitting in. No way I would have ever, ever entertained that thought." But in retrospect, she does recognize somewhere in the back of her mind that there was always this plan to do something more. The influence of her father was important. She learned from him that it was fitting to want more and to strive for more. There were changes in her life that had to be made and personal growth that had to occur for her to move on to bigger and better things. "And knowing always in the back of my mind that I was going to do something more than this when the time was right. And then slipping into administration and trying all of it really was a plan that had been laid down a long time ago, but I couldn't articulate it then."

Summary

Midge's career is typical of the normative academic dean career ladder described by Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, and Bragg (1983). Starting as a faculty member, she stepped on every rung of the ladder on her way to the academic deanship. However, once she stepped on the administrative ladder, her career progressed quickly upward. She moved to a senior position in four years. The experiences gained in each previous position prepared her for the next step.

Although she rose quickly, Midge's career path was not as linear as it seems. Traditional gender roles and gender stereotyping influenced some of her decisions and also posed barriers. For the first 18 years of her career, Midge was trapped in the

dominant culture of the 1960s and 1970s. She chose to remain a faculty member for 18 years in order to raise a family. She also chose to forego career changes because of her responsibilities as wife and mother. She stayed at Sand Hill because her husband was building his career and was unwilling to move. This was clearly a choice, and a choice that fit Midge during that time in her life.

However, after 18 years as a faculty member and 20 years as a mother and a wife, something changed. Midge changed from a passive 60s woman who built her life around her husband's career and her children, into a take-charge, goal-oriented, career-driven woman. What was the catalyst? Midge had always been aggressive; as a child, she played competitive and aggressive sports with her brother. But she took this aggressiveness and reined it in when she married; society's message was that such forcefulness was inappropriate for women, and Midge capitulated to that pressure. Her father had raised her to be self-sufficient and strong-willed, but he was also trapped in the dominant culture of the 60s as well as working-class culture. Although he wanted her to be self-sufficient and strong-willed, he also wanted her to be a wife and mother. So, Midge took on the roles of wife and mother and kept her determined nature in check. However, a number of events in Midge's life liberated her and released her suppressed potential. At 42 years of age, Midge started a new career and a new life.

The first event, and maybe the most important, was a conversation with the President of Sand Hill Community College. He recognized Midge's potential and the aggressive nature she had been repressing. He took her under his wing and became her mentor. He told her she had the potential to be an academic administrator and

encouraged her to set goals and reach for opportunities. He affirmed for her the potential she knew she had and strengthened her desire to succeed. Midge was given permission by a powerful male to become an aggressive woman. This nongendered, affirming message proved to be very important to Midge's career growth and development.

The president had also cultivated an institutional culture that encouraged people to strive to reach their potential, and particularly, he encouraged women to break out of traditional roles and away from stereotypes. He created a climate that was safe for risk-taking and pursuing the next career step. This positive environment, coupled with his affirming, nongendered message, helped Midge break free from her own internalized gender barriers. She had chosen to be a wife and mother because that was the cultural norm. Society's message about the appropriate role for women was so strong that it almost prevented a talented woman from achieving. The potential was always there. The strong-will was always there. The aggressive nature was always there. It took a positive environment and a message from a powerful male to put Midge's administrative career in motion.

However, another barrier, this barrier institutional in nature, initially impeded Midge's climb up the administrative ladder. Traditional gender roles influenced Midge's first career choice, nursing, a traditional female occupation. Long considered a nonacademic vocation by many in higher education, this choice almost obstructed her climb to the next rung on the ladder. In order to climb, she had to prove herself as an academician to the faculty in the traditional academic disciplines. She got a masters

degree in Health Education because she recognized she needed a degree seen as more academic than nursing. Her mentor encouraged her to pursue a doctorate, which Midge refers to as the "union card." In fact, he more or less forced her into obtaining her doctorate by calling her Vice-Dean. This was his carrot on the end of the stick; he knew she had the talent but needed the doctorate to move to the top. The doctorate gave her the necessary credentials to become a senior academic administrator.

But the doctorate was more than just a union card. The doctoral program nurtured Midge's professional development, enriched her mind, and altered her convictions. As a doctoral student, Midge read about the education of women and how traditional societal roles had shaped and influenced women's lives. She began to reevaluate the role of women in society, and, most importantly, to reevaluate her role in society. The experience was positive in that she came to a better understanding of her relationship with her father. It was negative in that it led to the demise of her long marriage. Midge's husband was still trapped in the dominant culture and could not grow and change with his wife. They had grown apart and she needed to end the marriage. If some good can come out of bad events in life, then the divorce played a pivotal role in Midge's career development; she was free to pursue goals she would have never considered when she was wife and mother.

Midge also grew professionally by reading and writing about higher education issues. She wrote papers in which she had to articulate and defend a position. She was forced to think about higher education from a more global view rather than from her narrow view at a small community college. She became a critical speaker and a

critical thinker. Her ability to speak and write the academic language proved Midge was an academic to the naysayers who questioned the credentials of the one-time nurse. And through her education, Midge gained self-confidence in her ability as a higher education leader.

In four years time, Midge moved from department chair to a senior academic administrative position. A good part of Midge's career development was serendipitous in nature; she was at the right place at the right time. The culture at Sand Hill Community College and the types of programs offered were conducive to Midge's inter-institutional professional growth. The nursing program and other allied health programs formed an integral part of the institution's growth. Midge's background in allied health, combined with the strength of these programs at Sand Hill, provided her with an atmosphere within which to gain valuable experiences and develop professionally. She was largely responsible for the growth of the allied health programs. As the college and the allied health programs blossomed, so did Midge's career. But Midge was also a player in the game. Midge knew she wanted to be an academic leader. She took on greater responsibilities for the allied health programs in order to gain the experience necessary to prepare for the next step. She volunteered to sit on committees for the experience. With each experience, she knew she wanted to move to the next level. Midge became more goal-oriented, more career-driven and more confident. Her success at middle-management positions proved to herself and others that she could be successful at the senior level. Her breadth of experience and

her proven effectiveness helped her successfully compete for each new position — she was the logical choice.

Midge always possessed the desire to succeed. There was always a plan to do more; she was just waiting for the right time. She chose to delay her career, waiting to become an administrator until her children were grown. And clearly, she did make choices which fit both her personal and professional life. But it was more than just waiting for the right time. In order to do more, Midge needed to break free of the dominant culture that placed women in the private domain. As she broke free from this trap, she grew both professionally and personally and was able to make the difficult choices necessary to achieve her goals. She chose to sacrifice her marriage when it came time to build her career. She chose to spend her own money to attend HERS because of the importance of professional development to career growth. These choices, woven together with her skills, talents and desire to succeed, shaped a very successful career, albeit 18 years after it had begun.

At this point, it is almost trite to say that Midge's relationship with her mentor, the President at Sand Hill Community College, was critical to her career growth and development. He affirmed her potential and encouraged her to succeed. He opened up doors for Midge. He did not create positions for Midge; rather, he encouraged her to apply for vacant positions because he knew she was a viable candidate. His encouragement bolstered her self-confidence, and the institutional culture, which he nourished, fostered Midge's career development. Three years ago, he left for another institution. Since that time, the culture has changed and become less favorable. The

faculty and administration are unhappy with the changes recommended by the Board of Trustees, and Sand Hill Community College has been in disarray. In three years, the college had two presidents and is currently looking for its third. It is time for Midge to make a career change. Thus, she is actively pursuing presidencies at other institutions. Midge is ready to take the next step in her career; she is ready to climb to the top of the higher education administration ladder. All-in-all, Midge is an aggressive, goal-oriented change-agent who relishes bringing projects to fruition. It is this tenacity that made her successful in her career pursuits.

Josephine

Josephine is the Dean of Academic Affairs at Silver Bay Community College. She speaks with pride about Silver Bay and is quick to show you the many successes and unique aspects associated with the institution. It is quite clear that Josephine cares deeply about her institution and is very committed to the college.

Josephine speaks with a strong sense of self-confidence. She admits that she was not always self-confident, this confidence grew. She is a first-generation college graduate who was not always sure what she wanted to do professionally. As she experienced many different events in her life and in her career, this self-confidence blossomed. However, this strong sense of self-confidence does not make her arrogant. She is humble and attributes a large degree of her success to her learning experiences. "I think it is the experience of going through different events in a lifetime or in a

working career that gives you self-confidence. That doesn't mean that I don't make mistakes. I make plenty of them, but they are learning experiences."

Josephine is quite comfortable with the woman she has grown into both personally and professionally. She confesses that she is a workaholic who possesses a strong desire to strive for excellence and a strong desire to be of help to others. These three characteristics have been very important to her career and her success as Dean of Academic Affairs. Her strong desire for excellence and her willingness to work hard have insured that Silver Bay offers excellent academic programs that give students the opportunity to be successful in the workplace. And her strong desire to be of help to others motivated her to write grants and start programs that make a difference in people's lives. In 1987, Josephine started one of the first programs for women in technical education. She speaks of this accomplishment with great pride and lauds the impact it had on the lives of the women who participated.

> I felt very much in favor of it for the very reason that I think that welfare and that cycle of poverty is so vicious it keeps expanding. And I also realized that a technical education would provide these women with an opportunity to gain skills that would make them employable. Not only employable, but with a salary at which they could afford to support their children.... I felt that the women who got through the program, and even some of them who did not get through the program, that there was a major change in their lives.

Josephine is very competitive, who concludes, "Is that good or bad? I think it is good." Her competitive nature drives her desire to excel and to be goal-oriented. Although she is very competitive, this competitiveness does not get in the way of her

ability to work with others. She uses her competitive nature and her desire to work as a team member to encourage others to strive for excellence.

> You need to work with people. And the other thing is you have to create opportunities where people work together and not put a whole lot of obstacles in people's way. That's one of the key elements here. To make sure that everyone within the team performs to maximum potential. You can't do it alone.

As a team player, one of Josephine's favorite words is "integrate." She uses this to talk about what is important in management and what is important to building a successful management team. She tells her staff and the students in her management class, "whatever you do, don't ever look at things in isolation. Integrate, integrate, integrate."

Josephine is very committed to her institution and truly enjoys her job. She takes her position as Dean of Academic Affairs very seriously and works in that position to make certain that students and faculty are successful. She likes the flexibility that the position offers and that the position allows her to reach a broader audience, an audience made up of faculty and students. "I think being able to make things happen so that it encourages the teaching process. I think that's very rewarding to me." From the review of her career, it is evident that she is respected by her colleagues and coworkers. Her professionalism and effectiveness as an administrator have been key to her career success.

Josephine's Career Path

Josephine has worked in higher education administration for 32 years. She graduated in 1964 with a baccalaureate degree in Secretarial Studies Education. While an undergraduate, Josephine worked in the registrar's office. Upon graduation, it seemed natural that she be hired as Assistant Registrar. "When the offer came to be Assistant Registrar, it was very natural for me to make the transition from student worker into the assistant's position." As an employee of the university, she took advantage of tuition waiver and completed her M.B.A. in Business Administration.

The first 14 years of her career were spent working as Assistant Registrar at a large university. Thinking about a career change, she noticed an opening for a Registrar at Silver Bay Community College, a new community college in a urban area not far from the university. She applied for that position. At the same time, the Registrar's position opened up at her current institution. She also applied for that opening and within a span of two days was offered two positions. She accepted the job at Silver Bay for two reasons: "It was purely financial. It was financial, actually it was two things. My decision was to go to a smaller institution, to try something new and to see what I could do." However, an analysis of Josephine's career would indicate that she was also looking for a new challenge. Silver Bay, a college in the early stages of evolution, offered that challenge.

Since that time, Josephine has worked as an administrator in a variety of positions at Silver Bay (see Figure 5). Figure 5 shows Josephine's age corresponding to the number of years spent in each professional position. Her career path has not

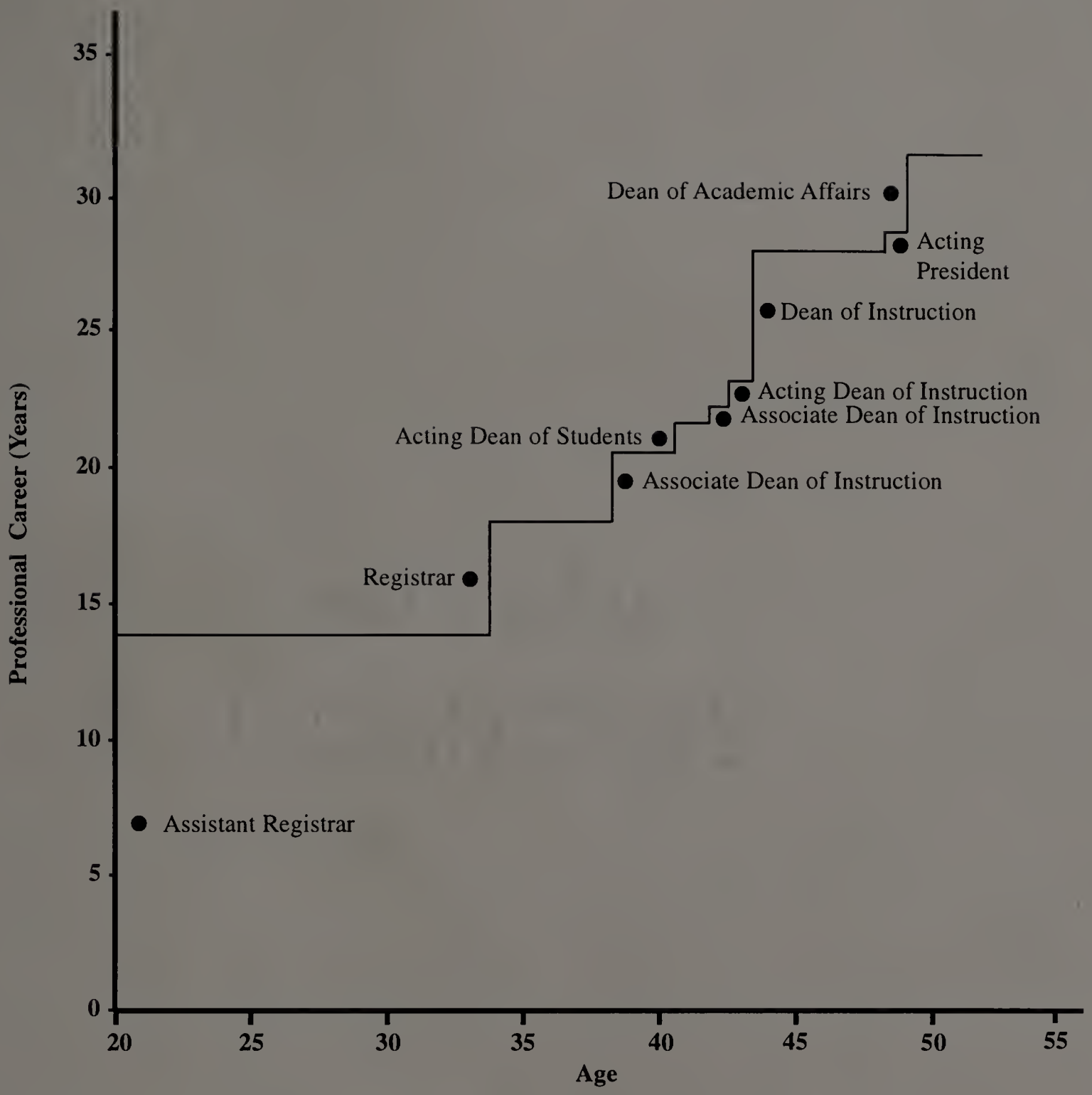

Figure 5
Josephine's Career Path

followed the traditional academic affairs ladder. Her career criss-crossed student affairs and academic affairs, where she served in a number of positions. From the Registrar's position, she became the Associate Dean of Instruction, a position she held for 2.5 years. In that position she was responsible for providing in-house training for business and industry and for managing the evening division of the college. Two and a half years after Josephine became Associate Dean, the President of the college left for a new position. The Dean of Students became Acting President and Josephine was asked to serve as Acting Dean of Students. She served in that position for about one and one-half years before returning to her position as Associate Dean of Instruction. Six months after Josephine returned to the Associate Dean's position, the Dean of Instruction left the institution. Again, Josephine was asked to fill the void and serve as Acting Dean of Instruction. She held that position for one year, until she was named Dean of Instruction.

During that time period, the college went through a major reorganization; Silver Bay merged with another college. In the midst of the reorganization, the president of Silver Bay, who was supposed to serve as president for the reorganized Silver Bay Community College, left the institution. Again, Josephine was tapped to fill in. She was named Acting President/Administrative Head, serving in that position for six months until the reorganization was complete and a new president was hired. At that point, she was named Dean of Academic Affairs and has served as the senior academic officer for Silver Bay Community College since that time. Obviously, there is something very special about Josephine for the senior administration at Silver Bay to

turn to her every time a void needs to be filled. It is her competence as an administrator and her willingness to take on new responsibilities and challenges that encourages people to choose her over others.

When asked why she chose to pursue a career in higher education administration, Josephine responded that her career was purely serendipitous. "I fell into it. Accident. Luck." There never was a conscious master plan to be a senior administrator; her career decisions were made based on her commitment to the institution, not on some master plan. She admits, "I was never consciously making decisions." However, it is interesting to note that when she made the decision to move to Silver Bay from the university, she did so because she recognized that her chances for upward mobility at the university were "extremely limited." The Dean, who was responsible for the Registrar's Office, was young and, in Josephine's opinion, not planning to leave the university anytime in the near future.

In retrospect, Josephine recognizes that she probably never thought of herself as a senior administrator because she was a first-generation college graduate. She basically allowed her career to take form in a serendipitous manner. However, because she was always willing to take on new responsibility and "fill the void" when asked, she moved quite naturally up the academic affairs and student affairs administrative ladders at Silver Bay Community College.

Building an Administrative Career

Silver Bay Community College has gone through a number of changes since its inception as a college, and Josephine has been employed at Silver Bay almost since that time. The structure of the institution has never been stagnant and has gone through at least one significant metamorphosis. One of the reasons that Josephine has been comfortable building her career within this institution is that "there were always exciting things that were going on." She was always right in the middle of all of those changes. "It was a great deal of fun for the simple reason that we were all working like devils to get the institution off the ground. So yes, I've changed. It's not as if I've been in the same traditional stable environment." When asked to fill a vacant position, she never declined the opportunity. She is quick to point out that one characteristic of an effective administrator is, "how well we deal with change." She viewed each position change as a means of gaining experience. And she accepted new assignments because she liked her work so much and she considered Silver Bay "a family affair."

Thus, throughout her career at Silver Bay Community College, Josephine had the opportunity to wear many hats. And because the college is small, she's had the opportunity to be involved in every aspect of the administration. "The advantage of working in a small institution is that you can stick your nose into almost everything that goes on." Being involved in all of the goings-on of the college has been very important to her career. She was able to expand her role as an administrator. Because she had exposure to student records and student activities, she was ideal for the position of Acting Dean of Students. Because she was responsible for running the evening

division and subsequently gained a background in curriculum and program development, she had the experience and the knowledge to serve as Dean of Instruction. And because she had been involved in almost every aspect of the management and operation of the college, it was natural for her to be named Acting President/Administrative Head. Her broad-based knowledge and experiences made her the logical choice.

Being Committed

If asked to find one word to describe Josephine and her career, one would choose "committed." Josephine is very dedicated to her college; in her opinion, she works for "the greater good of the institution." She is committed to occupational education and to providing students with educational opportunities to ensure their success. And she is devoted to the students as a whole because, "the students are the most important component of an institution."

Selfless Commitment to the Institution

Josephine is genuinely committed to Silver Bay Community College. She is so committed that when the institution was having financial trouble, she served as Dean of Instruction and managed the evening division for about six months. "I found myself working from 8:30 until 10:00, Monday through Thursday. And this was self-elected, money was tight." Again and again, she spoke about doing things for the "greater good of the institution."

> We have so many talented people who contribute to making everything happen; to making me look good, and I help the President make the institution look good. It's all the same kind of thing. We all contribute towards the same thing.

Although she is not an engineer, Josephine is a member of the local chapter of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME). She joined SME because her college has a number of programs in technical areas. By attending meetings of the local SME chapter, she has been able to obtain the supplies and person-power necessary to offer technical educational programs. She selflessly chose to be active in an organization that would benefit the institution, not one that would benefit her career.

> It [SME] was a source of information for us in terms of getting [outside] people into our technical advisory committees. It was a source of consumable supplies for our programs when things were tight with money.... And through that group I have contacts and they're able to help us in terms of getting someone to teach a class or even telling us what company is at the cutting edge of the technology.

In the back of her mind, however, Josephine knew that working for the greater good of the institution would enhance her career. She selflessly gave her time to SME all the while realizing, selfishly, how she would benefit professionally from the experience. "I tend to be more institution-oriented than my-future-oriented because I think the institutional orientation will bring the others." This career strategy worked for Josephine. When positions became vacant or projects needed a leader, the senior administration looked to Josephine to lead the way. Her dedication spurred her career development and helped push her up the administrative ladder.

Commitment to Occupational Education and Student Success

Josephine is the consummate community college senior academic officer. She is dedicated to the type of education offered at two year schools believing, "the important thing is that our students get a well-rounded education and that they be able to move forward and hopefully be as fortunate as I've been." She works with business and industry leaders to develop occupational programs that will make local people successful in the workplace. And she recognizes how important technical education can be for a large portion of the American population. "We provide the kind of education that employers need and so a lot of people come to take courses at the college."

This commitment to occupational education is linked to her commitment to student success. Early in her career Josephine recalls being told by a president at another institution that, "you are never too busy for students. If you are too busy for students then you need to be busy looking for a job elsewhere." She firmly believes that the students are the most important component of the institution. Her experience as Registrar made her keenly aware of the difficulties students had scheduling their classes around their personal lives. Her experience as Acting Dean of Student Affairs drew her closer to students' issues and to issues for alumni. So she dedicates her work as academic dean to making certain that students are successful once they leave Silver Bay. "In my lexicon, the greater good of the institution is what we do for our students." And because she is committed to occupational education and to student success, she is quite comfortable growing professionally at Silver Bay Community

College, an institution whose mission is to offer curricula that have been designed to meet local employment needs. She has no desire to move to another institution because the curriculum and type of programs offered at Silver Bay make a difference in people's lives. The simple fact that her curriculum vitae has not been updated in about two years serves as a testament to her commitment to Silver Bay and its students. "My resume is not out there right now saying I'm looking for another position. That's not the case."

Help Along the Way

While an undergraduate student and while serving as Assistant Registrar, Josephine worked for a woman whom she considers to be her first mentor and a role model. This women taught her how to act, dress, and speak like a professional. She nurtured Josephine and helped her make early career decisions.

> She was a role model, not only in terms of the work place, but also personally in terms of how to dress, how to speak, and a couple of other things. She was an overall influence. As a matter of fact a few of us used to call her "mama." So she was a very positive role model.

At the same time, Josephine developed a strong relationship with the Dean of the School of Business Administration: a man who was, "across the board, very much pro-student." He also nurtured her skills and helped her grow professionally. He recognized her professional ambivalence associated with being a first-generation college student. He took her under his wing and helped her choose a career. Both of

these mentors were very significant to Josephine's choosing a career in higher education administration. When the opportunity arose at Silver Bay Community College, they encouraged her to fly free and take on a new professional challenge. "Basically, both of them came from 'expand your horizons.' 'Don't just get locked into one thing.' 'Open up your options.'"

Outside of her relationship with her first two mentors, Josephine could not identify any other mentors who were significant to her career. She never consciously made career decisions, so she never felt the need to reach out to someone to help her with her career. However, she does admit that she was very lucky to have several men as supervisors who encouraged her professional growth. She put them into the mentoring position not to move her career forward, but to expand her knowledge base and to help her gain more experience. "I put them into the mentoring role because they had broader experience. It was wonderful for me because it was a learning experience." Clearly, she was unconsciously preparing herself for the next step by broadening her horizons and accumulating an abundance of experiences.

Education and Life-Long Learning

Josephine was recently awarded her doctorate in Management. She chose Management over Higher Education because of her background in Business Administration and a desire to "not backtrack on a whole lot of education courses." But she did not pursue the degree because she wanted to leave Silver Bay. She pursued the doctorate because she wants to end her career as a faculty member. At this point in

her life, Josephine is planning her career. Sliding into retirement as a teacher, a transition into a quieter life, is Josephine's final career goal. "I had a plan that probably by the time I'm 58-59 or so, I would like to get out of administration and become a full-time faculty member. I was positioning myself for the future. Right now I still enjoy this." Getting the doctorate was so important to her that she paid for the tuition and fees by remortgaging her house. She also did not want to take a sabbatical because, "if they can do without me for a whole year where I work, then they don't need me anymore."

Josephine never consciously chose to attend professional development workshops or conferences because she was never consciously planning to change careers. She is more likely to attend conferences if they "strike her fancy" and if she thinks they will make her more effective as an administrator. She is a member of a number of professional organizations within her local community. But she is quite clear that she is part of those organizations because she believes they have something to offer her institution.

Summary

Josephine spent her entire career at Silver Bay Community College in administration moving from one position to the next on her way up the academic administrative ladder. Unlike Midge, Josephine never served her college as a faculty member. And although her career criss-crossed academic administration and student affairs administration, it is apparent that each experience prepared her for the next

step. She never actively pursued any position after being hired as the Registrar; she was appointed to each position. However, whether it was conscious or unconscious, she did position herself for growth — she gained the experience necessary to maneuver up the academic administrative ladder. Each new skill acquired provided her access to the next step.

If it was possible to identify three attributes which were important to Josephine's career, they would be: her willingness to work hard, her desire to strive for excellence, and her commitment to her institution. Josephine adopted the Protestant work ethic; if you work hard and are productive, you will be rewarded appropriately. She firmly believes her career flourished because she was willing to work for the greater good of the institution and was committed to the institution. Whenever there was an administrative void, the senior administration always looked to Josephine to fill the void, and each time she accepted the challenge. She was willing to wear every hat because in her mind, she was working for the greater good of the institution. And in accepting the challenges and filling the voids, she gained a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Josephine has worked at Silver Bay almost since its inception. As the college grew and prospered, Josephine's career flourished. Josephine has grown and changed with the college and has continued to serve as a member of the senior administrative staff even through the college's latest reorganization. In each position she proved herself a competent and effective administrator making her an indispensable resource for the college. Thus, when the academic dean position became vacant, Josephine was

the logical choice. And even though she never admitted that she desired to become the academic dean, she unconsciously prepared herself for each step. She always said "yes" when the administration asked her to take on an acting or interim position. She stayed involved to learn as much as possible. By learning as much as possible, by broadening her horizons, and by working hard for the good of the institution, Josephine was preparing herself to climb up the administrative ladder. Her relationships with her mentors at Silver Bay affirm this. She never consciously sought career advice from these senior administrators; she used them to expand her knowledge base and broaden her horizons. And even though she was not asking for career advice, she was using their knowledge to develop her career. It was her depth of knowledge and breadth of experience, much of this gleaned from her mentors, which made her the ideal candidate for the academic deanship.

At this point in her career, Josephine does not aspire to a presidency; her goal is to serve her institution effectively as the Academic Dean until she is about 58 or 59 years old. She obtained her doctorate not because it would advance her career, but rather to grow intellectually while preparing for retirement. In essence, her doctorate degree prepares her for her last career move. She wishes to slip into retirement quietly as a faculty member teaching management. That is Josephine's dream, a dream which she "holds in abeyance until I really want it."

Emerging Themes

A number of common threads or themes have emerged. First, both Josephine and Midge were hard workers. They were willing to go the extra mile if it benefitted the college and the students. Both labored to achieve excellence. Both were committed to their colleges and to the types of programs offered in community colleges. They believe that occupational education programs, the types of programs offered at most community colleges, train graduates to be successful in the workplace. And they are both committed to the types of students drawn to the community colleges: students who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. Josephine and Midge are professionally fulfilled working at institutions that offer educational opportunities to people whose prospects may be limited.

Second, Josephine and Midge initially lacked in self-confidence. However, this self-confidence grew as their careers' flourished. And as they became more self-confident, they were able to take on the next challenge and move up the administrative ladder.

Mentors played an important role in career growth and development, which is the third emerging theme. Josephine's early mentors taught her how to be a professional and encouraged her to consider a career in higher education administration. Her mentors at Silver Bay Community College provided her with the experiences necessary to broaden her horizons and expand her knowledge base. Midge's mentor was also very significant. He affirmed her potential, pushed her to excel, encouraged her to take the next step, and pushed her to complete her doctorate.

Without his positive encouragement, Midge might never have finished her doctorate or pursued the academic deanship. Thus, both women's relationships with their mentors were significant to their career growth and development.

Both Josephine and Midge tried to learn as much as possible, which is the fourth theme. Josephine served her institution by never declining an opportunity when asked to fill a void. Through each position change, she gained a depth of knowledge and a breadth of experience. Midge recognized early on that in order to successfully expand her career, she needed to learn as much as possible. Her mentor encouraged her to do just that. So Midge served on as many committees as possible to learn about as many aspects of the institution as possible.

Education served different purposes for Midge and Josephine. Josephine used her doctorate to learn and to prepare for retirement. Midge used her degree to move up the academic administrative ladder. What is similar, however, is that both women grew intellectually via their doctoral studies. Whether or not this directly influenced their career development, graduate school helped each gain self-confidence and grow as a critical thinker and speaker.

Thus, their stories suggest many common threads. Hard work, education, increased self-confidence, and the influence of mentors propelled Josephine and Midge up the academic administrative ladder. However, because human behavior is so idiosyncratic, the data revealed many differences. Austin, the next respondent, will add still more pieces to the puzzle.

Austin

Austin is the Academic Dean at Twain Community College. A woman who loves to write, with years of experience teaching English as a Second Language, Austin enjoys diversity and learning about new cultures. Although she loves her job as academic dean, she at times considers herself a "frustrated cultural anthropologist."

From the outset, it is obvious that Austin is a complex women whose interests and attributes diverge. Her gregarious and social personality, self-described as a "a bit of a ham", belies her tendency to run into a corner and do "skunk work." She oftentimes thinks she can complete a project faster and better alone, however, she values collaboration and recognizes that "none of us is better than all of us." And although she loves to work collaboratively, she does admit that she likes to be in control. "I think we'd all be lying if we said we didn't like control." She is competitive yet collaborative, and collaborative yet likes to be in charge.

Austin loves collective bargaining, particularly the rigidity of the process and how it challenges her to be creative. "I have always had this sort of sick interest in negotiations and collective bargaining. It's tough in that you know it can become so rigid, but it really challenges your creativity and how to get around the rigidity of it all." As a professional, she learned to be objective and nonemotional, making her the ideal academic dean in a public college whose faculty are represented by a collective bargaining unit.

Austin does not consider herself ambitious, but she does admit that others have described her that way and she does not find that to be negative. She is admittedly

aggressive although she did not play sports as a young woman. "When I was in high school I wanted to run cross country or track and they didn't have that for girls. I wanted to play tennis and they didn't have that." Her predilection toward individual sports fits her tendency to prefer working alone. Since she was not able to participate in athletics, she turned her determination toward her schoolwork and excelled academically. "I did excel in certain arenas of academics, I would put more of my energies in there. I always loved to write and so I wrote a lot in high school and college."

A skilled and composed professional, Austin admits that she was not always so poised. As she developed professionally her self-confidence grew. "I haven't always been that way. It came with higher positions and being in the areas where you've had to do it [speak confidently]." With this growth in self-confidence came the ability to speak her mind; she is not afraid to deal with conflict or stand up for herself when potentially contentious situations arise.

The single attribute that has kept Austin sane through every trial and tribulation associated with a position in administration is her sense of humor and her ability to laugh. "I take my work seriously without taking myself too seriously. If you can't have fun at work, you know, don't. I want to get the Ben and Jerry's bumper sticker that says: If it's not fun, why do it?" Clearly, Austin has had fun and enjoyed her career. Underneath this light and friendly exterior is a woman who truly takes her work seriously and is firmly committed to community college education. A self-described proletarian who believes that education opens up the doors to success, she

has devoted her life's work to institutions who offer opportunities to educationally and economically marginalized peoples. From the center of Africa, to the barrio of a large American city, to the inner-city community college, Austin's career has been committed to working with disadvantaged persons.

> I'm committed to the community colleges and for all the reasons you've heard a hundred times as mundane as they may seem. The diversity, the challenge of the students. I taught developmental writing last semester and it helped me to realize that's why I do what I do, even as Academic Dean.... I guess my proletarian ways might eventually keep me out of places like that [more elite institutions], but there again, I'm not sure I want to be in those places.

Austin's Career Path

Austin did not begin her career with the intentions of becoming an academic dean or even of being in higher education. Her first goal was to be a high school teacher.

> I knew I wanted to be a teacher and of course having grown up in the 60s, you were taught that's what you do because that's what women do. They don't become academic deans or colleges presidents, they become teachers. My aspiration was to be a high school teacher in English or Social Studies. When I got out of the University, I couldn't find a teaching job, as no one could in 1972. So I went into the Peace Corps.

Austin spent one year in Africa with the Peace Corps, teaching English as a foreign language. She returned to the United States and moved to the west coast after being offered a full-time faculty position teaching Adult Education, English as a Second Language at a community college. This community college, located in a large

urban area heavily populated with immigrants, is a multi-campused system containing three campuses and 10 continuing education centers. The entire system is managed by a Chancellor. Each campus has a President, Academic Dean, and Division Deans, including a Division Dean of Continuing Education. The continuing education centers are managed by a Dean of Continuing Education.

After two years in that position, Austin was asked by the President to become Project Leader at a Continuing Education Center in the inner-city: "he offered me the opportunity." Still unsure of what she wanted to do professionally, Austin began attending law school part-time. After two years of law school, she decided that she did not want to be a lawyer. She recognized that she was very successful working with adult learners and English as a Second Language speakers, so she obtained an M.A. in Education from a local university.

As Project Leader, Austin was very successful in implementing recruitment and retention programs. Her success caught the eye of a Dean at a Continuing Education Center in the system. He recognized her talents and persuaded her to apply for a vacancy as Associate Dean of Continuing Education at a center that served a large refugee population. She successfully competed for that position and spent the next eight years developing and coordinating programs in English as a Second Language, adult basic education, GED preparation, developmental education, and business education; she also was responsible for overseeing several large federal grants.

In 1988, the first woman President was hired to oversee the largest urban college within this system. This President recognized Austin's talent and promoted her

to Dean of Off-Campus Programs (a division dean position) where she was responsible for all of the satellite programs which dealt with adult, remedial, and business and industry training programs, as well as associate degree programs at military bases. Austin became the first female dean ever to be hired at this campus working with four male deans.

Thus, Austin spent the first 17 years of her career in one system (see Figure 6). Figure 6 shows Austin's age corresponding to the number of years spent in each professional position. Austin was either encouraged to move up the administrative ladder or promoted by a senior administrator within the system. She was persuaded by one President to become a Project Leader. A Dean recommended she apply for an Associate Dean position. And the President of the largest urban community college promoted her because she had witnessed how effective Austin was as an administrator. "She called me in and said to me, I would like to get a promotion for you. I would like you to come in as our Dean of all the satellite programs in the southern half of the city." Clearly Austin is talented. Not every professional has the luxury of being sought after for positions. It is Austin's talent, high level of energy, and willingness to learn that inspires people to pick her out of the crowd. These individuals provided her with opportunities to successfully climb upward.

After 17 years of working in the same system Austin realized that "it was time to do something else." She was completing a doctoral internship as Dean of Labor Relations while writing her doctoral dissertation. At the same time, Austin intended to marry a man who wished to return to the east coast to be closer to his daughter. So

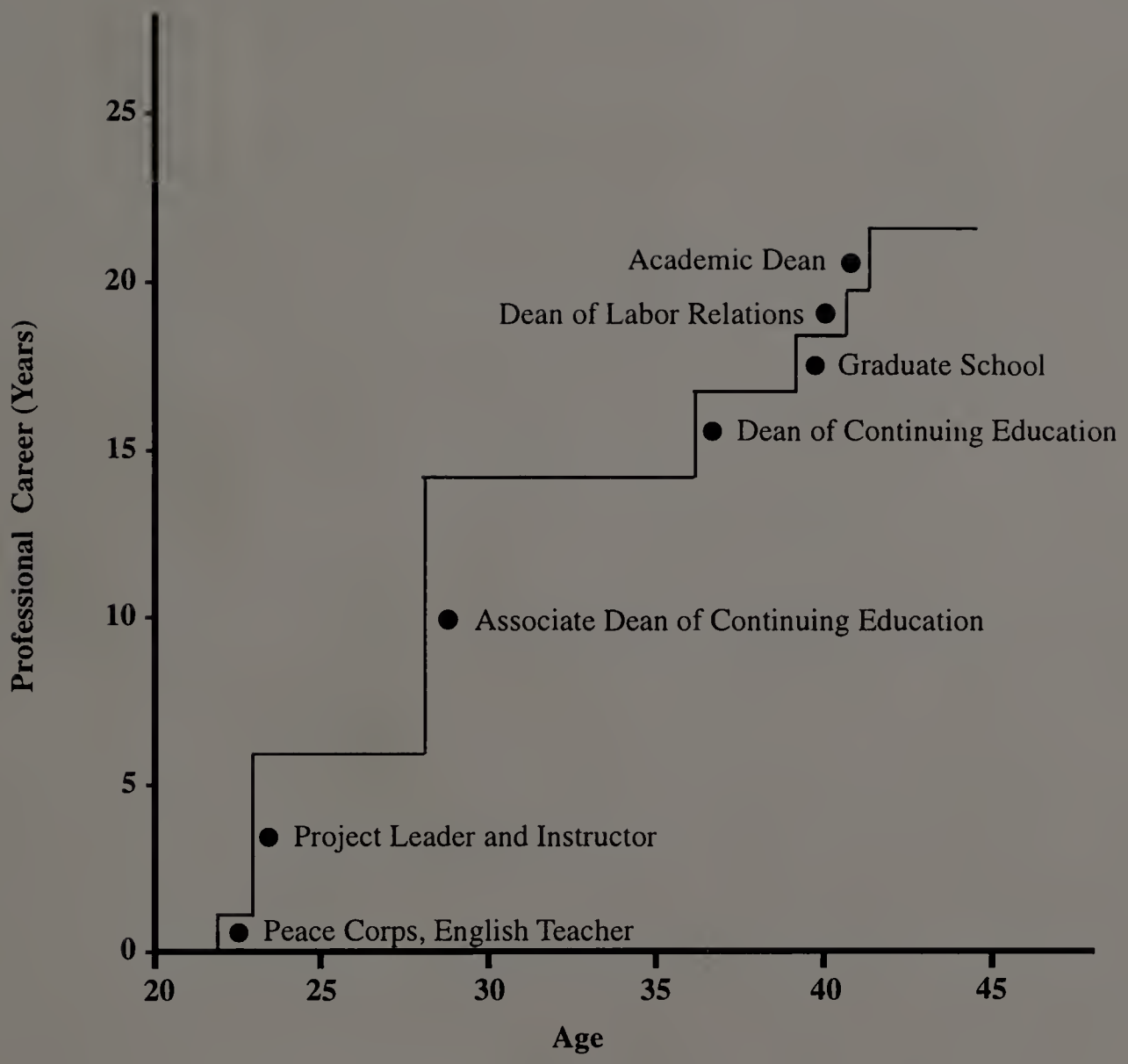

Figure 6
Austin's Career Path

Austin began the process of searching for her next job somewhere in New England. Austin describes herself as being a sequential person who needs to move up the administrative ladder one step at a time. Thus, she felt her next logical step on the ladder should be to an academic deanship. She also knew through her reading as a doctoral student, that if she decided she wanted to pursue a presidency, she needed experience as the senior academic officer.

While searching the Chronicle of Higher Education, she spotted an Academic Dean position at Twain Community College. To ensure her success, she employed three specific search strategies. She made certain her resume clearly outlined her accomplishments and her skills. She confirmed that her references were people who were up-to-date on what they knew about her. And she went into the interview with the attitude that she was going to be natural and have fun. "I think my strategy in the interview was I wanted to go in, I wanted to be myself. I wanted to be natural. I wanted to be fun. I wanted to be thorough, and I wanted to remember all the people's names. And I did all of that." Within a six week period she successfully defended her dissertation, got married, and was hired as the Academic Dean at Twain Community College.

Building an Administrative Career

Even though Austin's initial goal was to be a high school teacher, once she embarked upon a career in higher education, the experiences and knowledge that she acquired in each position prepared her to move upward. Her career is linear; she

stepped on each rung of the academic administrative ladder moving from Faculty to Project Leader, to Associate Dean of Continuing Education, to Dean of Off-Campus Programs, to Dean of Labor Relations, to Academic Dean. She regards her career as a series of logical next steps. She applied for the Academic Dean position because "really that's my logical next step, from division dean to academic dean." Her next goal is to attain a presidency. However, she is also pursuing vice-presidency positions because a vice-presidency would also be a "logical next step in career choice."

Finding the Right Fit

Although Austin was hired for the first academic deanship for which she applied, the position was a natural fit. Twain Community College is a large inner-city college located in New England, the area where Austin's new family lives. The faculty at Twain are represented by a collective bargaining unit. The student population is very economically and ethnically diverse. For a woman who loves to work in a multicultural setting, Twain was the perfect location. She had the experience necessary to be successful in this type of environment. She had been Dean for Labor Relations, conducting briefings and trainings on grievance procedures, faculty evaluation, and collective bargaining agreement implementation, and she had worked at a large, urban community college where she gained experience working with economically and educationally disadvantaged students.

> I think this job was written for me; someone who is committed to diversity, someone who has and can work with faculty in difficult situations, and someone who was very aware of and in-tune to collective bargaining. It was one of those jobs that fit the region where I wanted to be. I knew it would be my logical next step in career choice.

All in all, this position fit Austin like a glove. A "frustrated cultural anthropologist" who loves diversity and loves working with people from different cultures, Austin thrives working in a multicultural setting. Thus, she has an affinity for the types of students at a college like Twain. She is committed to the open door mission of the college and to offering educational opportunities to educationally and economically marginalized students. The responsibilities of the job play into all of her passions and her strengths.

> It is the black, inner-city female students who are single parents and work all day and get their moms or sisters to baby-sit for them so they can come to school, or the guy who got laid-off and is coming back and getting a degree. It's all those reasons. It's all those access of opportunity reasons that you know, as mundane as they may seem, I really do believe in. I don't think I would be happy in a place that had your 18, 19, 20 year-old undergraduates — where it's more of the traditional population perhaps.

Help Along the Way

Advice and input from mentors were crucial to Austin's career decisions; mentors opened up doors for her and encouraged her to take the next step. Two men and two women were very influential in helping shape her career. Bill, her first mentor, was Dean of Continuing Education at one of the 10 centers. Austin recalls

that he was very much a father figure who had years of experience in higher education administration. He was a father figure because he said things to her when she was in her 20s that she would never put up with now. They weren't overtly sexist comments, but at times, they were almost patronizing. And these comments were not meant to be. His comments were typical of a man raised in the early part of the 20th century. He said things like, "you are new to this, you are young. You are married [to her first husband]. You probably will go off and start a family. You are good at this but you probably only want to be doing it part-time." When he realized that Austin was serious about her career, he became serious in terms of his advice and mentoring. He was the first person to tell Austin, "Don't underestimate your potential." He gave her opportunities to grow and gain experience because he knew she was talented and desired to learn more. "He always sort of let me latch on to these new opportunities and he knew I would get tired of doing the same thing indefinitely." He encouraged her to apply for the Associate Dean of Continuing Education position. When she was hired for that position, he became more seriously supportive. Their relationship was such that she knew his door was always open and she turned to him whenever she needed career advice.

Her relationships with her two female mentors, Joan and Madeline, were much different. They were more aggressive than Bill, more aware of what women can and should be doing, and consequently they pushed her to take on new challenges. They were her "cheerleaders." Madeline, a colleague and friend, pushed her to pursue her doctorate. Joan, the President of the college, promoted her to Dean of Off-Campus

Programs. Together, the three women shared a plan. Their goal was to get Austin the education and experience necessary to move her to the senior academic administrative level. When Austin made the decision to go to graduate school, Joan supported her sabbatical. When Austin began contemplating a presidency and questioned whether or not she was ready for the next step, both women told her, "Come on Austin, of course you are ready, you have been ready for a couple of years. You just had to go through the steps."

As a graduate student, Austin developed a mentoring relationship with Jack, the director of the graduate program. Jack, like Joan and Madeline, advocated her taking the next step and is now supporting her in her search for a presidency. He assured her that becoming a president was "the logical next step. That's what you should be doing and go for it."

Besides encouragement, each mentor affirmed Austin's potential. She professes how important their support has been to her growth, both personally and professionally. "I think more what it has meant to me was someone saying, 'You can do this.' You know, someone really saying, whatever it is, there will be a next step and you need to go on to it." These mentors recognized Austin's talents and encouraged her to stretch herself to prepare for the next step.

Bill and Joan were important to Austin's career because they gave her opportunities to gain a breadth of knowledge. They strengthened her talents by giving her assignments from which she could gain diverse skills and they encouraged her to be

an active participant. They realized that Austin needs to be challenged, needs to stay vital, and likes to be doing several things at once.

> It [diversity of experience] is important to me personally because if I don't have it, I get bored. You know if I'm just doing one thing basically the same each day it gets boring to me... I think it keeps you sharp to be doing several things at once. And the other thing is it gave me more experience than I otherwise would have had and that worked well.

Bill and Joan provided her with those opportunities. Additionally, all four of her mentors encouraged her to learn as much as possible. Her diverse experiences and breadth of knowledge were key to her successfully competing for the academic deanship.

Education and Life-Long Learning

Austin is adamant that her doctorate in Higher Education Administration/Community College Leadership is most crucial to her career and professional development. She knew she needed the doctorate if she was going to climb the administrative ladder; the doctorate is the "union card," even in the community colleges. "If you are going to be an academic officer or a president, you have to go and get your Ph.D." Austin knew that education was the key to success.

As with finding the right next career move, Austin realized it was important to find a doctoral program that fit. Madeline introduced Austin to a doctoral program specifically designed for community college academic leaders. Since Austin was

committed to the community colleges, that program was right for her. It matched who she was personally and professionally. Today, when asked for recommendations on degree programs, Austin tells women, "Do it where you want to be."

Besides providing Austin with the union card, the program was, as Austin believes, "crucial to my career, but also to my development as a human being." As a result of the type of training in the program, Austin altered her leadership style from preferring to work alone to working in collaboration. The program also required graduates to complete an internship. Austin returned to the Central Office of the west coast college and worked as the Dean of Labor Relations honing her collective bargaining skills.

Professional development opportunities were also important to Austin's career growth. Austin enjoys going to conferences and presenting workshops. "Conferences, presentations, I really like doing. I'm a bit of a ham and I like doing them. That sort of thing is very important to me." Attending conferences gives her opportunities to network with influential people who can bolster her career. Via networking she was introduced to an academic professional group and hopes to be asked to join their academic affairs think-tank. Austin is cognizant that all of these activities play a role in strengthening her effectiveness as an academic administrator and advancing her career.

Balancing Personal and Professional Life

Austin describes herself as a career woman. However, she was willing to interrupt her career if necessary to move East with her husband; she did not want a commuting relationship. She was willing to take a career stop-out until the right next position came along in the right location. "I knew if I wanted to be married and have a family back here and I would have a step-child, that I would come back and do some part-time teaching and some editing or something." This was a very difficult decision for Austin; she had been in higher education for 17 years and her career was beginning to blossom. She knew her next logical career step was to an academic deanship and she had intended to pursue one before she met her husband. Getting married and accepting family obligations slightly altered the master plan. And juxtaposed against this willingness to take a career stop-out was the recognition that she was more marketable if employed. "I have always said to people I think you are more marketable when you already have a job. I think it's just our culture and I don't think it has anything to do with the individual." But she was willing to make that sacrifice because at that moment in her life, having a family was important. This was a choice that fit, not a sacrifice. Luckily, she was hired for the first position for which she applied.

Since her marriage, her career preferences have shifted slightly to accommodate her personal life. She is still ambitious, but she no longer makes career decisions based on her own whims. She consults with her husband on every career decision. He

is a supportive partner who recognizes and respects her career aspirations. Having his support is important as she pursues a presidency.

> Just the fact that you are living with someone, you have to take that into account. I certainly wouldn't accept any job without talking it over with him. Now if I really wanted a job, I can't imagine he would say no that he didn't want me to. He knows he couldn't stop me anyway so what's the point.... It's nice to have a partner who wouldn't try to stop me from what I wanted to do.

Her career has also changed in that she is more location-bound. Even though her step-daughter only spends weekends with her and her husband, Austin enjoys the role of step-mother. Thus, she is only considering presidencies and vice-presidencies in close proximity to her step-daughter's home. She mapped out geographic areas from which to pursue her next position. "We are much more location-bound and we realize that and we accept that. You know you sit down and draw a radius, a circle, and determine within the radius where you can go."

Having a family and making decisions based on family obligations is a new experience for Austin. She was married early in her career, but that marriage lasted only a short period of time. But like the career decisions she made during her first marriage, she does not let her new marriage and her family obligations interfere with her career goals and aspirations. She juggles her life to accommodate both. Although she knows she is capable of letting her work interfere with her home life, thus far she has been successful in managing both.

Dealing with Gender Issues

Probably the most difficult issues Austin has to grapple with are old gender rules and traditional social roles. These rules have influenced and shaped her professional life. Austin is a first-generation college graduate from a working-class family. The male-centeredness and attitudes about the appropriate role for women associated with working class culture put Austin in a double-bind. She became a teacher because that is what many women were supposed to do in the 1960s. Although her first career choice eventually placed her on the administrative ladder, she wishes that there had been more options available.

> Lily Tomlin said we were going to be a nation of nurses, teachers, and ballerinas. I was going to be a teacher. It never crossed my mind to be an engineer. I once thought about being a nurse and a doctor and I did go to law school for two years. But I wish there had been more gender-equity, more nontraditional counseling to give me more options.

And although Austin is a feminist, she is still unlearning old gender patterns and behaviors. She knows she is capable of being a college president but she still struggles with ingrained working-class attitudes about the appropriate role for women.

> You have to unlearn so much of what you learned. I'm still doing it at 44. I logically know I can handle a presidency; I'm competent, I'm capable, I'm intelligent, I'm experienced. But inside of me I still think "but you are supposed to be teaching 10th grade English." And I still fight that. I fight it every day I see my mother. You fight gender rules every day. They are still there.

Gender issues have also influenced Austin's work ethic. Even though higher education likes to pride itself as being meritocratic, Austin believes society at large still sees college presidents as men. Thus, Austin works hard proving herself as an adept professional. She sacrifices her personal time by taking work home. She is a worrier who internalizes her work responsibilities. And she resents that she thinks she has to work harder than her male colleagues if she wishes to advance her career. "I sacrifice a lot of my personal time. I'm sure the other women have said this — I take work home two to three weekends out of four. I resent it because my male peers don't work as hard."

Summary

Austin's career path, spanning 22 years, has been a series of logical next steps. Beginning as a faculty member and moving through division dean positions and associate dean positions to the academic deanship, Austin stepped on every rung of the academic administrative ladder. She did not begin her career intending to become an academic dean. Her career goal was to be a high school English teacher. But once she began teaching in higher education and got her first taste of academic administration, she knew that her goal was to serve as a senior academic officer.

Like Midge, traditional gender stereotyping and societal attitudes influenced Austin's career. Although she is a feminist and is very career driven, she is still unlearning attitudes about the appropriate role for women. The daughter of a working-class father and mother, Austin was raised in a male-centered environment. Early in

her career, Austin was stuck in the dominant culture of the 1960s and early 1970s. Because of societal attitudes of the 1960s and working-class norms, Austin started her career as a teacher with no aspirations to rise any further. After returning to the U.S. from a tour with the Peace Corps, she took a part-time teaching position at a community college where she excelled professionally. Seeing herself as a good teacher bolstered her self-confidence. When she accepted administrative responsibilities and realized that she was capable and competent in that area too, her self-confidence grew even further. Her first mentor, Bill, played a big part in building up her self-confidence and helping her see herself as an academic leader. He affirmed her potential by telling her not to underestimate her potential. He encouraged her to take the next step, to take the risk, to pursue a career not considered traditional to her gender. Madeline and Joan were also important in that respect. They pushed her forward whenever she doubted herself. They pushed her to envision herself as a career woman, they pushed her to see herself as a college president. They built up her confidence and helped to shape her career. This new-found self-confidence allowed her to break free from societal norms regarding traditional careers for women.

Today, even though she possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue a college presidency, she continues to struggle with ingrained gender rules regarding the appropriate career for women. She asks herself, "Can I be a college president? Can a woman be effective as a college president?" In her mind, she replays old tapes of her mother instructing her on her role as a women. Even though Austin has chosen to pursue a presidency, her mother subtly tries to reinforce old gender norms,

reminding Austin about her role as wife and mother. Austin works hard to fight her mother's message and society's messages about gender. Her high level of self-confidence helps; she tunes out both her mother and negative societal messages. She is capable of doing anything she desires.

Education was another key to Austin's success. Her doctorate degree served as much more than the union card necessary to move to the senior level. The doctoral program strengthened her skills as an academic leader. She used what she learned directly in her next position. Her dissertation and work in collective bargaining prepared her for an academic deanship at a community college whose faculty are represented by a union. She grew intellectually, becoming a critical thinker and speaker. And she gained another mentor. Jack, a well respected academic leader, is actively assisting Austin in her pursuit of a presidency.

Austin is a planner who likes to be in control. And although she does not consider herself ambitious, she set high standards and goals for herself. She carefully sketched out a career path which fits her style of doing things sequentially. She carefully planned her career and is in control of that plan. She moved along a sequential path from faculty to project leader, from project leader to associate division dean, from associate division dean to division dean, and finally, from division dean to dean. She is intent on climbing to the top of the administrative ladder. She is in control of her destiny and will work tirelessly until she achieves her goal of a presidency.

Austin recently remarried and has taken on the responsibility of a step-daughter. This new role as wife and mother could have altered her career plan. To accommodate both her personal and professional life, she was willing to take a career stop-out to move East with her husband and if necessary, was willing to work part-time as a faculty member if she could not find an academic administrative position. Luckily, that did not happen. Instead, within a six week period, she defended her dissertation, got married, and was hired as Academic Dean at Twain Community College. And although her career has shifted from the west coast to the east coast, she remains in control and career-driven. Currently, she is searching for a vice-presidency or a presidency in New England. This will allow her to continue to strive for career success while remaining close to her husband and step-daughter.

Finding the right fit has been a theme throughout Austin's career. The doctoral program in community college leadership fit Austin — Austin is committed to serving the types of students drawn to the community colleges and to the open door access mission of community colleges. The academic deanship at Twain Community College was also the right fit. Austin is a multiculturalist dedicated to working with ethnically diverse peoples. Twain, a large inner-city community college, serves a population that is economically and ethnically diverse. Being responsible for the unionized faculty at Twain also fit. Managing faculty in a collective bargaining situation is one of Austin's strengths. Obviously, her job responsibilities matched her skills and strengths. Thus, it was inevitable that Austin would successfully compete for the position at Twain, it fit her like a glove.

Being an academic dean also fits Austin. She is a skilled and composed professional who is committed to higher education, particularly the type of education offered at the community colleges. She has committed her life to working with economically and educationally marginalized persons, and has the type of dedication required of a community college academic dean.

Emerging Themes

Clearly, Austin, Midge, and Josephine share similarities as well as differences in their career development. Like Midge and Josephine, Austin was a hard worker. She was willing to take on any task in order to learn more.

Austin, like Midge and Josephine, initially lacked in self-confidence. As their careers flourished, so did their self-confidence. Mentors were important in assisting in this process and in opening up the doors of opportunity. Midge's mentor was the first person to tell her she could be successful as an academic administrator. Josephine's mentors helped her choose a career path and encouraged her professionally, thus encouraging her self-confidence. And Austin's first mentor, Bill, affirmed her talent and told her not to underestimate her potential. It is likely that with time and age, each would have gained self-confidence. Their mentors were instrumental in accelerating the process.

Again, education was another key to success. Both Midge and Austin described the doctorate as the "union card" necessary to move to the senior level. But the degree was more than just a union card. All three of these women grew intellectually through

their experiences as doctoral students. And in the process of growing intellectually, they also proved themselves as academicians, qualified to serve as senior academic administrators.

Professional development opportunities were also important. Midge attended HERS at Bryn Mawr College to network with women interested in helping her develop her career. Austin presents at conferences and was recently asked to join an academic think-tank. And Josephine belongs to local professional organizations. Whether gaining a breadth of knowledge or networking with people who can enhance her career, each woman's professional development experiences were important to her career development.

Austin has added two new pieces to the career development puzzle. Finding the right fit was important to Austin's career development. The doctoral program in community college leadership matched Austin's career aspirations. The multicultural setting at Twain Community College corresponded with Austin's desired to work in an ethnically diverse college. Even though Midge and Josephine developed their careers in one institution, the institution fit. The missions at Sand Hill and Silver Bay coincided with each woman's beliefs about higher education. Midge, Josephine, and Austin are committed to working with disadvantaged students and in institutions with open door access. Finding the right fit, both in personal beliefs and in professional goals, was important to these women's career growth and development.

Both Austin's and Midge's case studies indicate that traditional gender roles and gender stereotyping can influence career development. Both women started their

professional careers in traditionally female roles — Midge as a nurse and Austin as an English teacher. Both women discussed how the messages they received from either their parents or society-at-large influenced their decisions to pursue traditional female occupations, thereby limiting their career opportunities. For both women, becoming strong enough and confident enough to look beyond gender stereotyping was a long, and sometimes painful, process. The influence of mentors and time were the keys. Midge's mentor was the first person to tell her that she had potential and she could be successful as a senior administrator. Austin's first mentor gave her a similar message. Because both of these individuals were male, their influence was paramount in shaping each woman's career. Their positive influence helped both Midge and Austin to see beyond traditional roles for women and to stretch themselves further and strive for positions not considered traditional to women.

Traditional gender roles also influenced their career development in other ways. As Midge gained self-confidence and began the process of looking to a senior academic administrative experience, her marriage dissolved. Her husband wanted her to remain a stay-at-home wife and mother, but Midge wanted more for herself. Midge did spend the first 18 years of her career working as a faculty member. She chose this career because it was conducive to raising a family — the hours where flexible, allowing her to be at home when her children returned from school. Midge sees this as a choice because raising a family was and is important to her. Gender stereotyping influenced Austin's career in a different manner. Although Austin has proven herself as a

competent administrator, she still struggles with ingrained gender rules regarding the appropriate role for women.

These emerging themes and working hypotheses bring us closer to an understanding of career growth and development for women in the community colleges. However, because human behavior is so idiosyncratic, not all of the working hypotheses are true for each respondent. The next case study, Nell, a women who started her career in human services, will showcase how different, yet similar human behavior can be.

Nell

Nell is the Dean of Academic Services at Mountain Lakes Community College. For the past six months she has served as Interim President, a position she will hold for another 6-9 months. Nell is very comfortable acting as Interim President. She is excited about the chance to serve her institution and the opportunity to use her administrative skills in a different way. "I feel I have a broader canvas right now. I can be more effective." Her current position has given her more freedom to make decisions and to be more influential in terms of the everyday operation of the college.

A writer and a poet, five years ago Nell was awarded a Fellowship in writing from the state Council on the Arts. The life of a writer and poet are very important to her — so much so, that she believes she lives a double life: one as a writer, the other as an administrator.

> You see I have always had this kind of double love of writing as well. And it remains very important to me. It's funny to have kind of a double career. This position remains very important to me at the college but so does the life of a writer.

Five years ago she completed a second masters degree, an M.F.A. in Writing. Her first masters is in Community Development and her baccalaureate is in English.

Nell was a first generation college graduate who chose "quite traditionally" to get a degree in English. Not an academic superstar in high school, she was, however, a high achiever. She took a large number of advanced courses and was quite successful. She doesn't consider herself overly aggressive but recognizes that sometimes she can be. She was a cheerleader in high school and she remains quite active athletically. "I did play sports, I was a cheerleader. It was the biggest athletic opportunity [for girls] at my school. I don't play sports now, but I do like to be active. I like biking, hiking, and running."

As a writer and a poet, Nell possesses a large vocabulary. She uses her knack for words effectively as a public speaker. "I think words come more easily to me than they do for some people, both writing and speaking. Speaking is just a gift that I've got." Although she speaks confidently, she recognizes that there were times in her life when she was less than comfortable. But time and experience have bolstered her confidence. "A lot of that really does come with just being around for awhile and realizing that the world isn't going to fall apart if I make a bad decision. That there isn't much that can't be corrected."

Nell is an outgoing and personable woman. She enjoys interacting with people, but also relishes quiet and private time. She cares about her staff and tries to create an inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels safe sharing ideas and opinions. Her sense of humor is an asset in creating such an environment. "I think a sense of humor is enormously important. I love to hear funny things. I like to be in a meeting where there's lots of laughter. I think people learn well in that climate." Quick to make decisions and process information, Nell possesses many of the skills necessary to serve as Academic Dean and Interim President.

Nell is committed to Mountain Lakes Community College, a college that "truly embraces its access mission." She has always worked in institutions whose missions were to help people make personal changes. From Human Services to Education, Nell has dedicated her career to helping people take control of their lives. She knows she could be an administrator almost anywhere but she has chosen higher education because it is the key which opens the door to success for so many people.

> I was drawn to higher education because I do believe it makes a difference. I think I'm persuaded by the data that the single most important variable to move someone from an initial economic circumstance to a place with more mobility and more opportunities is a college degree.

Nell's Career Path

Nell's short career path has been more like a climb up a step-ladder; she moved from administrative positions in human services to administrative positions in higher education. She is comfortable and effective as an administrator, a career she believes

she was drawn to because of her personality. "I think I was drawn to administration because of what is almost personality. If you are someone who is comfortable making decisions and helping other people do the work and someone who likes focusing on more than one thing at a time, then it's a pretty natural route." And although she thinks of herself as the consummate administrator, her career choices have never been directed. "I don't think I've always had a very well defined career path. I'm not one who could have told you where she's going to be in five years or what she was going to be doing."

Nell began her career working in publishing. After two years she recognized that she needed a change, both culturally and geographically. She pursued a masters in a "very unusual program in the Midwest," a masters program in community development. Upon graduation she moved east with her first husband. Together, they made the decision to move to wherever either was offered the first job. He came to New England for a position, and two months later she followed, landing a job in human services.

Nell worked for almost 10 years in human services as a counselor, trainer, and researcher. She was drawn to the community college after teaching part-time as an adjunct English instructor. Nell pursued a part-time teaching position to make money and because she was beginning to think about making a career change. She had always enjoyed school and thought that she might enjoy teaching. However, she had no experience with community colleges, so she applied for the position at Mountain Lakes. Working in an institution with an open door admission policy and a mission

based on access to opportunities felt like home to Nell. "There was no community college in my own background. It just felt like a place where people believed that education could make a difference." When a position opened at Mountain Lakes for a Coordinator of Curriculum and Advisement, Nell applied for the job and was hired. By serving as an adjunct faculty member, Nell had put herself in the position to be chosen as the Coordinator of Curriculum and Advisement. Since that time, Nell has worked quite contentedly as an administrator at Mountain Lakes Community College (see Figure 7). Figure 7 shows Nell's's age corresponding to the number of years spent in each professional position.

Two Steps to the Top

Nell moved from administration in human services to administration in higher education. While this might seem to be an unusual career move, Nell believes that the college recognized that she possessed the skills necessary to be effective. "The administration of the college was willing to hire someone who came to the community college in a roundabout way, affirming my belief that where you came from isn't quite as important as what you are doing once you get there." Mountain Lakes Community College is a nontraditional college. The president and senior staff are located in a central office. The college does not have a main campus; there are numerous sites located across the state. Each site is managed by a Coordinator of Instruction and Advisement. Nell was hired to manage the largest site. She served as Coordinator of

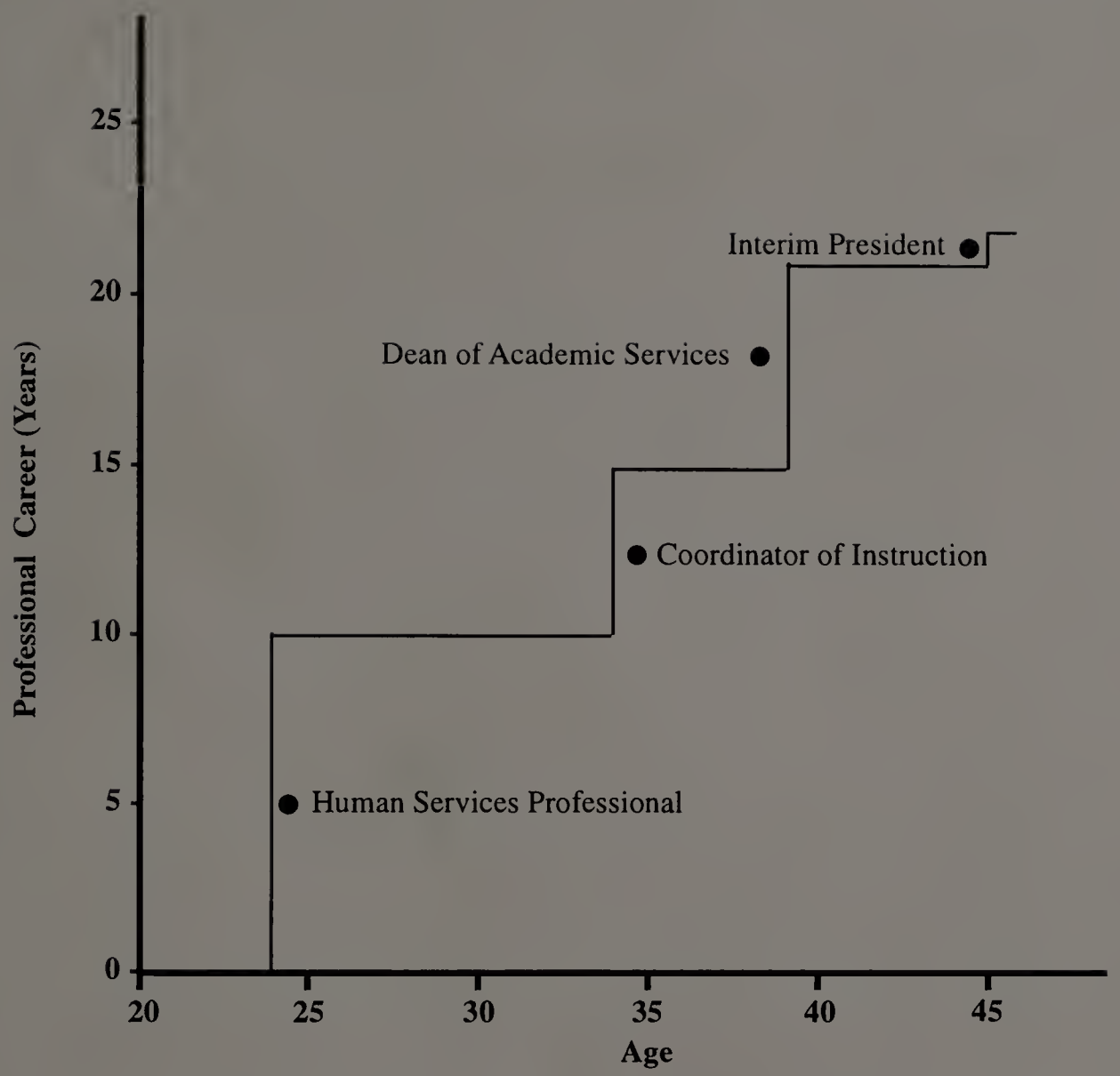

Figure 7
Nell's Career Path

Instruction and Advisement for five years, planning curriculum, hiring and supervising faculty, advising students, and coordinating academic programming.

When the Dean of Academic Services position (the senior academic officer overseeing all sites) became vacant, Nell vacillated between staying in a safe and comfortable environment or taking on a new challenge. She consulted with the previous dean who encouraged her to apply because this was "a good job if you are considering furthering your career in higher education." She was neither encouraged nor discouraged by the current president — he assured her that she was a reasonable candidate. Even though there were many qualified in-house candidates and many nationally recognized candidates, Nell was selected. She had established herself as a competent administrator. And she was someone who professed that curriculum development and the delivery of excellent academic programs were the principal responsibilities of an academic administrator.

> I think curriculum is fascinating. The college's decision about what it is going to teach and the balance between what it believes is solid integrated education and what the public is saying it wants to learn, is fascinating. Wrestling with that balance and getting to a spot where you are comfortable with the integrity of the academic program and believe that you are being responsible to the students' needs, to the marketplace needs, is interesting.

For the next five years Nell served as Dean of Academic Services. She was responsible for directing all of the college's instructional programs and curriculum, formulating academic policy, and designing the college's academic agenda and committee structure. When the president at Mountain Lakes resigned, Nell was asked

by the Chancellor of the system to serve as Interim President. She has been in that capacity for the last six months and will continue to serve until the Chancellor decides whether or not to conduct a national search. Either way, Nell is comfortable with her career and her career choices. "I think I was comfortable enough with the dean's job for five years and comfortable enough that I could apply for this on an interim basis and know that I could go back to the dean's job and resume it again."

Building an Administrative Career

Nell was never driven to climb the administrative ladder. She did not intend to become an academic dean or a college president; however, she is quite surprised at how well her skills mesh with the responsibilities of an interim president. She is not a workaholic, but she does have high standards and likes being effective. She never had a directed career plan — she pursued opportunities when she thought she could bring something to the position. Nell was pulled to the dean's position and the presidency not because she desired to move up the ladder, but because she felt she had something to contribute.

> I think I have pretty high standards and I like being effective. But if I'm doing a job and another job opens up where I think I can be more effective or think I have some talent to take to that, I do feel pushed and led to that opportunity. So I recognize opportunities as they present themselves.

In retrospect, however, she recognizes that she was ready to take on a new challenge when she applied for the Academic Dean's position and ready to move to the

next level when she was asked to serve as Interim President. She does consider herself lucky in that she was in the right place at the right time. When the college needed an Academic Dean, she was a well-respected Academic Coordinator and a viable candidate for the position. When the President resigned, it made perfect sense for the Chancellor to name her Interim President. Thus, a fair amount of Nell's career success was serendipitous — being in the right place at the right time. A fair amount of her success also was a result of her willingness to wait for the next opportunity to present itself. When the opportunity presented itself, she had positioned herself to be the logical choice. Also, she had attained a level of confidence that enabled her to take her career to the next level.

> I was in the right place at the right time. I had enough of a track record, the right track record, enough references from good colleagues, and enough experiences with certain groups that I was asked to do it. So I think there is always a lot of serendipity in life anyway, but not always.

For Nell, a career pattern exists. Juxtaposed against this pattern of making career decisions unconsciously is her acknowledgement that other opportunities exist. If the fit is right and if she can bring skills to the position, she may be led to it. Thus her career choices have been more intuitive than consciously intentional. Even though she has acquired the skills and reputation necessary to pursue a college presidency, she is not inclined to look for a position outside of New England. Nell realizes that there are many opportunities available, but she is not driven to pursue them. However, if

asked to move from the Interim position to become President, she will accept the challenge.

> I don't feel particularly driven right now. I'm enjoying the chance to try this work out and to craft and let unfold relationships with colleagues in a very new way. But, I'm really open to whatever possibilities happen at this point.

Recognizing Strengths and Weaknesses

One of the keys to successfully achieving a senior administrative career is recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses. Nell learned that lesson early in her career. She was told that to move ahead professionally in higher education, she had to learn two things. First, she had to become more comfortable with public speaking. Already a competent speaker, words come easily to Nell, she took the time to determine what constituted an effective speech. "I tried to figure out what you need to deliver a good speech. Well you need a well-written speech. So for that, I had a plan." Second, she had to learn to balance a budget. She put off learning about budgeting, a skill not natural to a writer, until she could put it off no further. Balancing a budget still causes Nell some anxiety, but she has gotten better at it and is actually excited about her year as Interim President and being responsible for the college's finances.

As she makes her way through each administrative position, Nell learns new skills by watching others at her professional level. She also recognizes that who she is personally is also who she is professionally; the whole bundle of her personal skills,

talents, and hesitancies composes her professional being. Her ability to balance several things at once, skills learned from balancing motherhood and career, serve her well professionally. By realizing her natural and learnable skills, she has been able to choose positions that fit.

> I think that's a social aspect that can be of assistance to women in administrative and executive roles. You are so used to balancing several things at a time, that when you're an administrator in a very complex organization, the idea of having to keep track of five or six people at a time isn't paralyzing. It can be helpful to women as administrators if they've had the experience of managing a home or raising kids.

Help Along the Way

Nell has not had a traditional mentor. There has not been one person who has taken Nell under his/her wing and helped her make career choices. In fact, Nell believes that women do not have mentors in the same way as men. For women, "mentoring happens intuitively rather than intentionally." Nell's most important professional relationships have been based on off-the-cuff conversations where she is able to talk on the telephone and hash out issues or problems with a colleague. These conversations serve two purposes — they affirm for her that her intuitions are correct and they assist her in making career decisions.

> Having conversations with people, feeling out the territory were important to me. I didn't need any guarantees that I was going to get the job, but I did need to affirm that I was a reasonable candidate for this. Having those conversations and thinking hard about why I wanted it and whether or not I really wanted it were important.

Those conversations did not happen naturally for Nell early in her career. She was more inclined to find her own way. As she grew professionally, she realized that the support and influence of others, both family and friends, were important when choosing career alternatives. She had no formal mentors, but she did have a support system nevertheless. Today, she is more likely to reach out to others. "I think that is quite important. I was just reading a quote by Lily Tomlin, 'We are all in this alone.' But we are all in it alone and together too."

Balancing Personal and Professional Life

For Nell, career decisions and personal decisions are intertwined much like the strands of a spider's web. She moved east, not because she had a job, but because she wanted to live in New England. She chose a M.F.A. in Writing not because it would serve as a terminal degree for a presidency, but because it would serve her well. Being a good writer and a good communicator is important to Nell. She is aware that not having a doctorate may preclude her from obtaining a presidency, but that is a bridge she is willing to cross when she gets to it. "If I were to discover that I was kept from those jobs by not having a doctorate, I'd have to think hard about whether or not I would then get one." But she is cognizant enough to recognize that circumstances change and life is not static. Career choices are ephemeral — they shift and change as personal circumstances change.

Family obligations prejudiced Nell's career decisions. She acknowledges that like other women, she succumbed to the traditional social role for women as the

primary caregiver. She was unwilling to give that role up. "I do think social training and conditioning play an enormous part in who we are." However, Nell sees this as a personal choice, not a career liability. Her career choices were predicated not on personal whims, but on her personal life in relation to her children and her partner. Her life and career priorities are much different now than they were when her son was younger. At that time in her life, career decisions were based on family obligations. These were not limitations; they were choices that fit.

> I don't think I would have made the choice to do this interim role when my son was young enough and I wanted to get to his games after school.... I think a lot of things like that happen to parents with kids at home, particularly women. You cut some choices and options off almost unconsciously. I don't say that with any anger here, it's just the closer you get to middle age, the more you take the long view on stuff like that.

Nell continues to struggle with this issue. She has a new 13 year-old step-daughter and she finds herself feeling a bit remiss that she does not have more time available for Katherine. She characterizes her new family obligations as being out-of-sync with her professional career. "My career is headed in the same direction of someone whose kids have left home." Support from her husband has been essential to her managing her new professional and personal role.

> I think when faced with the decision about becoming Interim President, I felt that it was my primary decision. But I felt that I wanted to make that decision with my husband. Just to say, here is what I think it means: you are going to get home before me every day, most of the caring for Katherine is going to fall to you. I'll do as much as I can.

However, even with his support, she continues to struggle with this issue and is not comfortable juggling her increased professional obligations with her personal responsibilities.

Nell has made other life choices which have resulted in trade-offs. She does not write as much as she would like to because she has chosen a more "directed career." She feels that she has shortchanged her community because she has not been able to make time to be involved in community work. But again, she sees these as compromises, not either/ors.

> I don't think that it has to be either/or. You don't have to be either a good partner to your significant other, or a success in the workplace. You don't have to be either a terrific professional or parent or some dynamo at the board table. Those aren't the choices we usually get in life. There's a zillion other choices.

Summary

Nell's entire career in higher education evolved at Mountain Lakes Community College. Even though she served as an administrator for 21 years, only 11 of those years have been in higher education. Nell started her career in human services and moved to higher education after serving as an adjunct faculty member at Mountain Lakes. Although the transition from administration in human services to administration in higher education may seem odd to many, it was not a peculiar transition. Nell is committed to helping people make personal changes and take control of their lives. What better place to influence lives than at the community colleges, institutions whose

missions are to help people take control of their lives through educational opportunities?

Never particularly driven to climb the administrative ladder, Nell made career choices which fit her personal and professional life. She based decisions on how they coincided with her obligations as mother and wife. As her life changed over time, her career options have changed accordingly. When her son was young, Nell was content serving in a position that allowed her to attend his school functions and be at home when he came home from school. She was clear-eyed about what she could and could not do professionally. Life was and is a series of compromises; Nell compromised her career to fit her personal life. As her son grew and became more independent, her career options changed accordingly. Nell had more time for her career and was able to pursue the academic deanship. For Nell, waiting until her son was grown to establish her career was clearly a choice that fit her lifestyle. And although she was content to serve as instructional coordinator while her son was growing, she nonetheless positioned herself well. When the academic dean position became vacant, she was well-known and well-respected as an administrator, thus she was the logical choice of the search committee. Nell's personal circumstances have recently changed. She has remarried and has a new step-daughter. Her life now comprises a balancing act, balancing part-time motherhood and senior administrator responsibilities. Although it is oftentimes difficult, she works hard to make certain her personal and professional life mesh.

Nell's choice to pursue a M.F.A. in Writing as opposed to a doctorate was also a choice that fit her personal life. She pursued this degree not because it would serve her well as an administrator, but rather because the degree would serve her well personally. Her M.F.A. was about self, not about career; Nell first passion is writing. But the M.F.A. was not just about writing. Nell grew intellectually through this experience while improving her writing skills. Via her M.F.A., she has proven herself as an academic. This degree has been useful in another manner. One of the attributes that has made her so effective as academic dean is her ability to express herself well, both orally and on paper.

Nell didn't just pursue opportunities; she applied for positions or accepted promotions because she thought she had something to bring to the position. She was pulled and led to positions not because she wished to climb the administrative ladder but because she felt she had something to contribute. Nell's primary goal was to serve her institution. If her career flourished because of her service, then that was an added bonus. However, even though she does not see herself as a climber, she clearly positioned herself for the next opportunity. The depth of knowledge and breadth of experience gained during her service made her the logical choice when she applied for the academic deanship and when she was asked to serve as interim president.

Another factor that influenced Nell's career development is her connection to people. Early in her career, she was hesitant to leave her position as coordinator of instruction because of the relationships she had forged with her colleagues. As Nell came to recognize that life is dynamic and constantly in transition, she learned that she

could maintain her relationships while changing positions. Her desire to stay connected to people also shaped her career decisions. Never having had one mentor, Nell had developed a support system nonetheless. When she needed to make career decisions or administrative decisions, she turned to her colleagues and friends. These off-the-cuff conversations served to affirm her intuitions and to assist her in decision-making.

A certain amount of Nell's success came from applying her natural talents, learning new skills, and positioning herself for the next opportunity. She drew on previous knowledge to recognize the right career fit. Her career was never directed; rather, she made choices based more on intuition than on intention. Some may find her career to have been serendipitous. That is not entirely true. Granted, as she moved from Coordinator to Dean, and from Dean to Interim President, she was in the right place at the right time. However, she was in the right place because she positioned herself to be there. She learned new skills and capitalized on her natural talents in order to be recognized as an effective and competent administrator. Her desire to serve combined with her commitment to academic issues, propelled her quickly up the academic administrative ladder. Nell is a consummate administrator whose career is flourishing.

Emerging Themes

Thus far, all four of the respondents have been committed to the community colleges — committed to both the types of programs offered and the types of students

drawn to schools with open-admission policies. In essence, all four of the respondents' careers are grounded in their desire to serve others.

Education opens up the door to opportunities. All four respondents grew personally and professionally through their graduate degrees. Nell chose a M.F.A. in Writing because of her passion for good writing. But like the others, she grew intellectually as a graduate student. Via their graduate degrees, all four women were able to prove themselves as academicians; they had earned the credentials necessary to serve as senior academic administrators.

Unlike the others, Nell did not have a mentor. Instead, she utilized a network of friends and colleagues when making career decisions. These off-the-cuff conversations affirmed her intuitions and assisted her in career decision-making. Thus, input from others is important when making career decisions. All four women could have made decisions alone, but affirmation and confirmation from friends, colleagues, and mentors facilitated the process.

Nell adds an interesting piece to the puzzle confounding the argument that traditional gender roles limit career opportunities. Nell, Austin, and Midge all saw gender as potentially limiting when they started their careers. Josephine did not see her first career choice as limiting, however, it was traditional nonetheless. What confounds the argument is the following: even though most of these women recognized that marriage responsibilities and motherhood are seen by society as woman's first career, they chose to take on those roles. Midge's desire to raise a family and her decision to be a faculty member for the first 18 years of her career was clearly a

choice. Austin's decision to move East because she wanted to be near her new husband and step-daughter was clearly a choice. And Nell's decision to base her career decisions on how they coincided with her family obligations, was clearly her choice. These women chose to take on the traditional role of mother and/or wife. Thus, it can be inferred that women have to make numerous choices in life, particularly, when it comes to fitting together career and family.

It is also interesting to note how these choices were episodic. Midge returned to work full-time once her children had grown to an age where she was comfortable being a working mother. Her failing marriage almost stymied her success as a doctoral student, but once the marriage had ended and she had regained a mental foothold, her career flourished. She is still reconciling with her feelings over the divorce, but she knows it was a necessary choice. Austin was willing to take a career stop-out to be with her new husband and step-daughter. Clearly a career woman up to that point in her life, Austin was willing to give up her career to have a family. And Nell made career choices based on motherhood. When her son was young, Nell was content serving in a position that allowed her to be at home when he returned from school. Once he became a young adult and was more independent, Nell was able to grow professionally.

Thus it seems clear that life events, combined with traditional roles for women, have influenced the careers of Nell, Austin, and Midge. All three of these women made choices that fit both their personal and professional lives. They made professional compromises to fit their personal lives and personal compromises to fit

their professional lives. Thus their careers were ephemeral; they shifted and changed as their life circumstances changed. And expectedly, many of these choices and transitions were driven by traditional gender roles. However, not one of the three regrets her choices; they were choices that fit.

The fifth respondent, Allison, adds some new pieces to the puzzle while fitting into others. Unlike Nell, Austin, Midge, and Josephine who were all first-generation college graduates, Allison's parents were educated professionals. Her career sheds some interesting light on how childhood experiences can shape career decision-making, illuminating how important context is to understanding career development.

Allison

Allison is the Academic Dean at Green Valley Community College. At 39 years of age, she is the youngest of the six respondents. A warm and friendly woman with lots of energy, Allison is very outgoing and loves to chat. "I really enjoy the social part of the job. I have a large network of friends all over. That is important to me."

Raised by a father who is a college professor and a mother who is a feminist, Allison was encouraged from an early age to pursue whatever interested her. She played sports (softball, basketball, and field hockey), and was involved in the theater. A good student who was comfortable in school, Allison and her two sisters received positive encouragement from their parents to strive for professional careers that were not traditional for their gender. Allison's mother hoped that she would become an

attorney. "I come from a family of all sisters and they are all professional. So there is no [gender] pressure there." Allison realizes that she chose a career in education because she was always comfortable in school and because she believes that education can make a difference in people's lives. "There is enough of an idealist in me to think that education is the right think to be doing. And I am a perpetual student, so it keeps me close to what is happening [in higher education]."

A curious woman who likes to do hands-on work, Allison has very diverse interests and gets involved in a number of projects simultaneously. "I have a wide spectrum of interests so that's probably a weakness. And that carries over into my work as well; that is part of the state of my desk because I have too many things going on at once." This love for hands-on work drew her to an institution with a relatively flat administration; she does not have an associate or assistant dean, and there are no department chairs. She is responsible for all 17 academic programs and 31 faculty.

> I have too many things going on at once, that is what draws me to a place like this where there is the dean and then it is flat. I don't have an associate or an assistant dean and I don't have department chairs. There are 31 direct reports which is great! I love it. It is really hands-on.

Allison loves to get involved in projects admitting, "I can get very easily involved in 742 projects." However, bringing all of them to fruition is one of her strengths as well as, one of her weaknesses. Under her leadership, the academic staff at Green Valley Community College has gotten involved in a number of innovative programs. In order to keep those initiatives vital and effective and to see them through

to completion, Allison has a tendency to deprive herself of sleep. Her latest project is motherhood. "I'm a mommy and that's a new role. I've been in this job [academic dean] four months and she's 11 months old. It's one of those projects where I said — whoa, I'm 38, if I am going to have a baby, I had better do it. Tuesday looks good."

A very student-centered academic administrator, Allison frequently uses "integrate" when talking about student services and academic programs. She likes to pull pieces together and build relationships between various groups of people within the college. She believes one of the weaknesses in higher education is the lack of integration between student affairs and academic affairs. She works hard to make these linkages. "I've spent probably the last five years trying to pull together pieces that I see as related and create sort of more cohesive experience for students."

An idealist who thinks that, "education is the right thing to be doing," Allison loves program development and takes pleasure in seeing students attain their academic objectives. Her commitment to academics and to student success is reflected in her career goals: "Academic VP at a larger community college, that's probably what I would like to do eventually. I'm not in any hurry. I'd be interested in that or an academic vice-chancellor in a multi-campus system."

Allison's Career Path

Allison has a baccalaureate in English. Her decision to pursue a degree in English was for personal fulfillment and was not a decision based on her desire to pursue a career as an English professor or as a writer. "The degree in English wasn't

about career, it was about self. It was about interest, and I still have a passion about good writing." Although English is her passion, her degree provided her with the tools necessary to begin a career in higher education. She was drawn to higher education because she liked being a student and the profession was familiar to her. "My dad is in higher education so it was a field that was out there for me."

Upon completion of her baccalaureate degree, Allison was hired by a large state university as a faculty member teaching developmental English. She served in that position for 12 years. Besides teaching full-time, Allison was also responsible for curriculum development, classroom instruction, student advisement, and supervision and training of assistants. Even though she was hired as a faculty member for the TRIO program (a federally funded program designed to serve educationally and economically disadvantaged students), she was not eligible for tenure or rank. The program was outside of the university structure as a separate division. However, she did function as a full-time faculty member teaching a larger academic load than most other university faculty. This experience, working with economically and educationally disadvantaged persons, coupled with the opportunity for tuition waiver at the university, motivated her to obtain her M.S. in Teaching English as a Second Language.

As Allison developed professionally, she discovered that she wanted to pursue a career in academic administration as an academic change-master. She felt that being an academic administrator would allow her to have a greater impact on higher education. For Allison to be excited about her work, she needs to feel a personal investment in the

institution and feel that she has influenced the end product, i.e., students' achievements of their goals. "There is a difference in intensity of work [faculty versus administration]. But the scope of impact and the ability to effect change on a greater scale was really compelling for me." Allison is also self-confident enough to believe that she can influence change. As a faculty member, she questioned decisions made by the administration. Moving into an administration was the ultimate challenge, the challenge to see if she could be an academic change-master.

> One spends enough time in the faculty to think "Oh well, if the administration would only do x,y, and z." And I got to the point where I said, all right smarty pants, why don't you put those shoes on and see if it is true. So there was an element of a personal challenge for me. And also just moving into an arena where the scope of impact was bigger was compelling.

However, Allison gets bored easily and likes to have her finger in all of the pieces of the pie. So the decision to move into administration was one-half needing to be involved and one-half needing to try something new.

> Really, it was a point in time, it was a cross-road. I would have decided quite happily do go on reading English papers for many years. But it was like, is this really it? Are you really happy to stop here, or should you just kind of try it and push yourself a little bit? So I needed to grow and try something new.

At the same time, Allison came to the realization that she was interested in pursing that career in the community colleges. An idealist committed to offering educational programs to disadvantaged persons, she felt she would be more useful to

those types of students in an institution whose mission is to serve educationally or economically marginalized peoples. "I really thought that a number of the students would have been better served by a place that was more student-centered and more career-guidance centered. A place where there was less stigma around developmental work with more of an opportunity to engage with professors than in a class of 500." However, she had no community college experience. She applied for an adjunct faculty position at a local two-year school and taught Composition II for one semester. This experience affirmed for her that she would be professionally fulfilled as a community college academic leader.

With almost a dozen years of experience in higher education under her belt, Allison knew that she needed to complete her doctorate degree to move to the senior level. A "perpetual student," Allison had been continuously working part-time on an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction since completing her masters degree. In 1991, 12 years after starting her career as a faculty member, she successfully defended her dissertation and simultaneously began applying for academic administrative positions at community colleges. She moved into her first academic administrative position eight months later.

Over the last four years, Allison's career has blossomed (see Figure 8). Figure 8 shows Allison's age corresponding to the number of years spent in each professional position. Her first academic affairs position was at Bayside Community College as Division Chair of Academic Development and Learning Support. Bayside Community College is a medium-sized college located in a blue-collar, industrial neighborhood of a

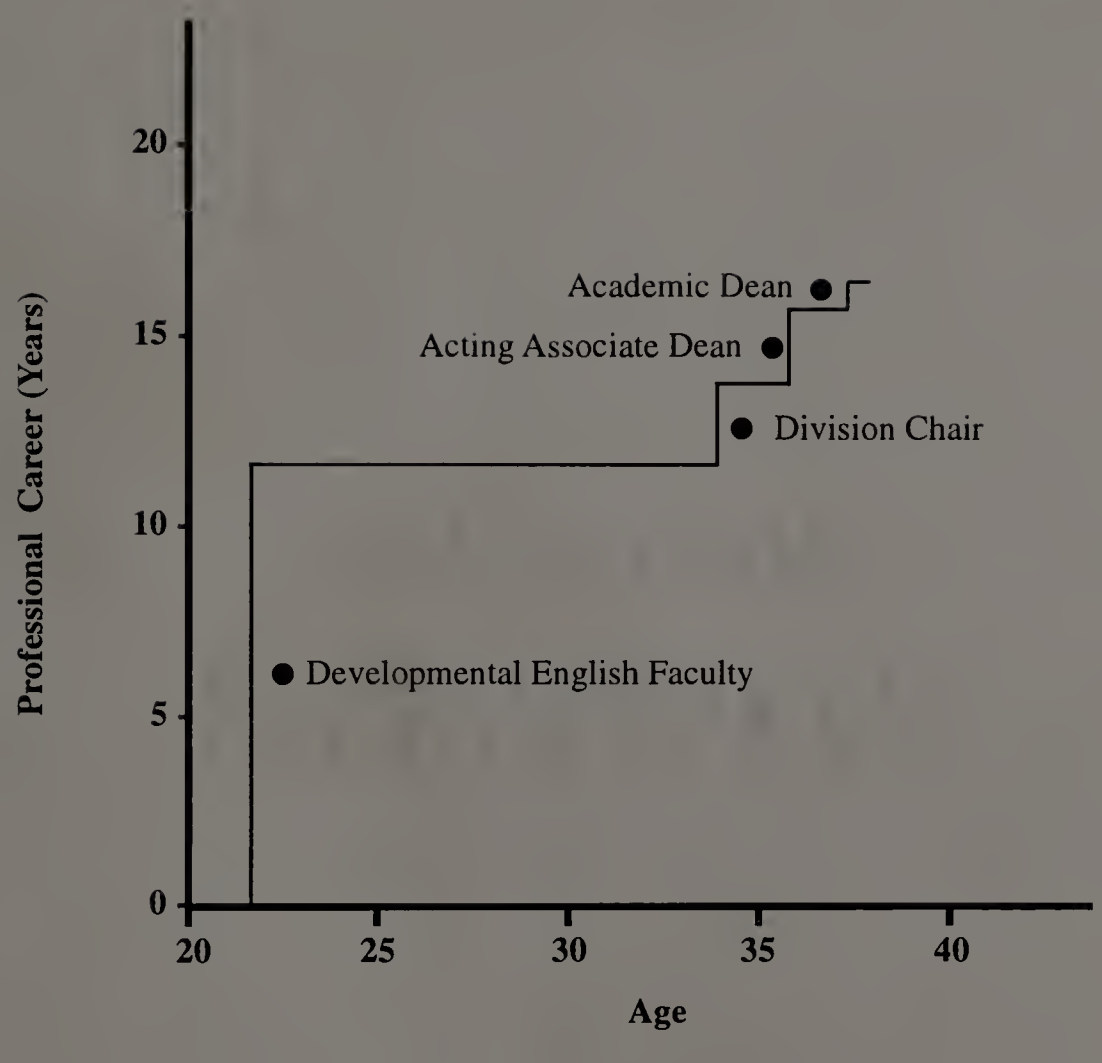

Figure 8
Allison's Career Path

large Eastern city. The college offers its approximately 3,500 full- and part-time students 22 career, associate degree programs and five transfer programs. A large percentage of the students require some sort of academic remediation. Because one of the responsibilities of the position was to oversee academic development programs, her experience in developmental education made her the ideal candidate for the position.

Two years later, she was asked to serve as Acting Associate Dean for Instruction taking on the responsibility of Perkins grant monies, articulation agreements with local schools, Tech Prep programs, and program development and review. During a transition in college leadership, she became responsible for the office of the Dean of Instruction. It was this transition that motivated her to look for a new job. Again, she began the process of applying to open positions. She applied for three academic dean positions and two associate dean positions. Six months and three interviews later, Allison was hired as Academic Dean at Green Valley Community College. Her background in developmental education was again the key. The search committee at Green Valley focused many of their questions around academic support services, particularly those for educationally underprepared learners.

Allison's climb to the academic deanship through developmental education is certainly not the most traditional path. "It's probably not a traditional path, but I haven't taken too many traditional paths in my life." However, she firmly believes that more academic deans in the community colleges should have experience in developmental education, particularly since a large percentage of community college students require some form of academic remediation. "Actually, I think more

academic deans ought to come from the developmental end of things, particularly when I look at the assessment results of our students. Seventy percent of our students that come here have a developmental need in something."

Allison is quite content for the moment being Academic Dean at Green Valley Community College. Being the academic dean allows her to have the type of impact on academic programs that she would like to have. She is also satisfied because the position offers enough challenges to keep her vital. And this current position gives her an opportunity to shape the future of academic administration. "There is an intriguing amount of rigidity still in the academic side and I guess I'm on a mission to at least make it bend a little."

Building an Administrative Career

Allison does not consider herself a climber; however, she is quite surprised at how quickly her career has taken off. Allison left Bayside Community College after 3.5 years, not because she wanted to climb to a more senior position, but because Bayside experienced an intense backlash against women. For many years, the institutional culture at Bayside was one that valued shared decision-making and collaboration. Most administrators maintained an open-door policy. The senior management team, composed of more women than men, decided to develop a plan to take the college into the next century. This team made some broad management decisions, changing the way the college went about its business. These decisions sent a small group of naysayers into "an absolute tail-spin." They decided that the reason the

college was changing had nothing to do with the world outside of Bayside; change was coming because women were in positions of authority. The response of this group of naysayers was to initiate a backlash against all women who did not agree with the group's philosophies. Women started experiencing incidents meant to make life so uncomfortable at the college that they would be pushed into leaving. Allison had confidential mail opened. Others became wary of saying the wrong thing for fear it would be used against them in some manner. As a result, many of the women made the decision to leave the institution.

Before Allison made the decision to leave, she did a self-evaluation of why she was at Bayside. She realized that she had been looking for an administrative opportunity and she had gotten one. It was now time to leave and look for a place that was in less turmoil, a place where she could feel comfortable and again feel ownership in the institution.

> I think what it meant was that I went earlier. It certainly meant that I had to define very clearly what I was going to do. And part of that definition came out of what I saw happening and what I learned from it. It was extremely painful. And quite frankly, at that point it didn't matter if I got the job I wanted or if I got a job.

Allison's experiences as an administrator at Bayside gave her a taste of what being an academic dean was all about. She realized that she had gotten good at it and that she liked being an administrator. So she felt confident enough to apply for jobs at the senior level even though she had not been an administrator for a long period of time. It was the backlash that forced Allison into moving faster than planned.

Finding the Right Fit

Allison interviewed at three other community colleges before being offered the academic deanship at Green Valley. Before each interview, she employed a number of search strategies. She acquainted herself with the institution by perusing college literature. She read and thought about issues she wanted to make certain to address in the interview. And she talked with students and got their views on the college. But most importantly, she cued in to signals that would ensure that the position was the right one for her. Allison knows and understands her own leadership and management style. She is well-read in the area of academic leadership, particularly around the issue of women in management. Working with the mostly female administration at Bayside shaped Allison's management style. President Michaelson's management style was one of cooperation and collaboration. As a "people person" who likes to communicate, Allison easily adopted this style of management. She knew she wanted to work at another institution where decisions were negotiated in a cooperative and collaborative manner. During her interviews, she paid close attention to the styles of the senior administrators and evaluated whether or not hers would mesh with theirs. She was willing to turn down a position if the mix was not right and she was "prepared to move to the middle of nowhere" if that was where the mix was. She clearly knew that she could not be effective as an administrator if she felt boxed in or hindered by the president.

> When you go looking, people always told me to pay close attention to who the president is. And it took me a long time to really interpret that in a way that was meaningful. This last round of interviewing I guess I came to understand what that means in terms of paying attention to how pervasive the management style of the president is in terms of institutional culture.

Within the first few minutes of her interview at Green Valley, Allison knew the management style of the president and the culture of the institution were the right fit. Green Valley Community College is a small regional community college located in a rural area of New England. Committed to providing high quality occupational, vocational, technical, and technological career programs, Green Valley offers 12 degree programs and six certificate programs. A young school, Green Valley has had only two presidents — the second, and current president, is a woman. Allison describes the culture at Green Valley as having a "good student focus." The mission of the college combined with its student-centered focus and the collaborative management style embraced by the president has created an institutional culture that is open and accepting.

> From the time I got here [during the interview process] until the time I left, there wasn't a moment where I felt the least bit uncomfortable. I thought well, that is what you are looking for. You are looking for a place where it doesn't matter whether or not you are in the president's office or the biology lab, it feels OK, it feels right. The questions they asked were the questions I would have asked. Since that time, there hasn't been a time when I have felt like I couldn't ask anybody anything.

Planning the Next Career Move

Allison is a careful planner as well as a risk-taker. She applied for the position at Bayside because she wanted administrative experience. She learned as much as possible in that position to prepare herself for the next opportunity. She got close to understanding what academic administration was all about and realized that she was good at it. Once she recognized that she was a good administrator, she was ready to plan for the next step. "You know if this is what you do, and if this is what you are good at, then let's see if someone else thinks that you are good at it." Her intent was not to leave Bayside so quickly. She was forced into seeking a change.

Since becoming an administrator, Allison has moved quickly from Division Chair of Academic Development and Student Support Services to Acting Associate Dean of Instruction to Academic Dean. Even though she has moved quickly, she does not consider herself a climber. "The reason I don't consider myself a climber is that I don't necessarily want to go any higher than this." An interesting paradox exists. Juxtaposed against her belief that she is not a climber is her tendency to plan and pursue whatever is necessary to achieve her goals.

> In some ways I've positioned myself for this job in so far that I had it as a goal and I saw myself working towards it. In other ways, some of the things that I chose to do, which ultimately were very helpful where I am now, were really choices based on interest because I really at that point didn't think that I was interested in moving that fast.

Was her quick climb serendipitous, or was it the result of careful planning and preparation? It was a little of both. The master plan had been to stay at Bayside to

hone skills and learn as much as possible. Although she had only been there 3.5 years, she gained enough self-confidence in her ability as an administrator to apply for a senior level position. She had the level of expertise necessary to throw her hat into the ring and dare to take on the challenge of a senior position. Part of it was luck that Green Valley Community College was looking for an academic dean when Allison was searching for a new position. The opportunity was there when she was ready to make the transition. And part of it was that she was the right person at the right time. She had proven herself to be an adept administrator. Thus, her career has been a mixed bag of choice and chance.

Currently, she is not pushing herself to rise any higher even though she aspires to an academic vice-presidency at a larger institution. She is competitive, but not competitive with herself in that she does not need to push herself to a presidency or vice-presidency as a means of proving success. She is quite content to be the academic dean. "I think that I had it easier than most people, and I think that is a function of how I saw the whole process. I didn't set any rigid timelines for myself and as I've said before, I'm thrilled to be here because this is where I want to be."

Help Along the Way

A number of people pointed Allison toward a career in higher education and eventually, to the community college. She was influenced by two faculty members when she was an undergraduate. One woman professor encouraged her to work in developmental education. She persuaded her to pursue a Masters in English as a

Second Language because "students with those types of needs were the students of the future." Another female professor talked with her about academic administration and the concept of leadership. These discussions were instrumental to her choosing her first job in higher education. When Allison was a doctoral student thinking about a career in community colleges, a male professor talked with her at length about making the transition from the university to the community college system.

But the most influential mentor was the president at Bayside Community College. Although Allison talks with a high level of self confidence, she needed the input of someone important to her to confirm that she had the potential to be a senior academic administrator. President Michaelson affirmed for Allison that she was ready to move to the senior level. She helped Allison recognize her strengths and her weaknesses. She encouraged her to work on her weaknesses while finding an institution that matched her strengths.

> President Michaelson was a big influence insofar as when I decided to look, I was unsure whether I was ready. I know I was ready to move, but I wasn't sure I was ready to move to this level. And she was very helpful in talking that through and talking about where she saw my strengths and weaknesses and where I should direct myself.

The input of friends and colleagues are also important to Allison. Friends served as "cheerleaders," encouraging her to take the step. Colleagues listened and helped her to define and shape career choices.

Education and Life-Long Learning

An avid reader, Allison calls herself a "perpetual student." She reads to learn more about higher education and she reads to make herself a more productive academic dean. "You need to read a lot. It's amazing how much I know about the other disciplines." As dean, she knows it is important to be acquainted with all of the academic programs. Since her background is in developmental education, she takes the time to read about career programs and the needs of these programs. She knows this will help her work effectively with the faculty. And she reads to stay current. Because she was a faculty member for 12 years, she is cognizant enough of the mind-set of faculty to recognize that to retain their respect, she must be knowledgeable. Being a reader and staying current helps her model a behavior she hopes her faculty will follow.

> I want to be able to put myself in the position of my faculty. One of my frustrations as a faculty member was, and I never checked it out, but I always felt like the dean was living on another planet and working at some other place. So it is really important for me that it not be the case. It is real hard for me to put myself in the place of the faculty as they deal with curricular issues if I don't have a clue about what is happening in their field.

The desire to learn is concomitant with her desire to pursue professional development. She participates in professional development activities for the same reason — to be more productive as an academic dean, not to advance her career. She attends conferences and workshops in which she will learn about topics of interest or which will benefit the college.

> I think there is a difference between people who want the academic dean's job because they want a presidency, which I don't, of people who want the academic dean's job because that is where their interests lie. If you go in the first route, you need to do the big national stuff, you need to conference your socks off and network. I do those things with a much different intent. If I'm going to involve myself in a project, it is much more likely to be a local project. I'm very much interested in community college networking.

And she makes a point of attending whatever is internally sponsored at her institution. "The faculty and staff here do a lot of on-site development and I always go to that both to learn and to support it from this office." Allison reads and attends conferences to stay current, to stay challenged, and to "stay in the game." All of these activities allow her to grow professionally without climbing any higher up the administrative ladder.

Summary

Allison did not start her career intending to be an academic administrator even though one of her earliest mentors encouraged her to think about academic leadership. Time and experience pushed her in that direction. Her willingness to take risks, to set up a plan and pursue it, and her conscious plan to be a life-long learner pushed her up the academic administrative ladder. Her career has been both chance and choice. She was not only in the right place at the right time, she was also the right person at the right time.

A competitive, self-confident, assertive woman, Allison differs in many respects from the previous four respondents. Like the four other respondents, Allison

competed in athletics. However, because of her age, Allison was able to compete in softball, basketball, and field hockey at both the secondary and the collegiate level. Because of her experiences as an athlete, Allison gained a high level of self-confidence and a strong sense of assertiveness early in her career.

Unlike the four other respondents, Allison comes from a professional family. Both parents have some college education; her father is a college professor. Allison received strong support from her parents to pursue athletics and to pursue nontraditional careers. For Allison, gender was not an issue when it was time to be a competitive athlete or when it was time to choose a career. She did choose a traditional field of study, English, but that was for self and not for career. Allison is a writer who is passionate about good writing.

A "perpetual student," Allison likes to learn as much as possible. Upon embarking upon her career at the university, she enrolled in a masters program. Upon completion of the masters program, she continued on in doctoral studies. When she made the decision to pursue an administrative degree, she attacked her doctoral studies with more vigor than ever before. Allison knew she needed the degree to move to the senior level, but she also knew that by completing the degree, she proved herself as an academician. Although her formal education is now complete, Allison is constantly engaged in informal learning. An avid reader with diverse interests, Allison tries to comprehend as much as possible about all of the programs at Green Valley Community College. In Allison's mind, a good academic administrator is a well-read, well-informed academic administrator. This strategy has been effective. Allison was hired

for a senior level administrative position with only 3.5 years of administrative experience.

A careful planner, Allison has positioned herself well for an academic administrative career. When she realized that she wanted to pursue a career in the community colleges, Allison applied for an adjunct teaching position. To get administrative experience at the community colleges, she applied for and was hired as a Division Chair at Bayside Community College. When thinking about leaving Bayside, Allison did an evaluation of her career. She recognized that she had come to Bayside to get administrative experience. She had gotten that. She realized that she was also looking for experience in the community college. She had gotten that too. Thus, it was time to pursue her career goal of a senior academic administrator. Presently, Allison is still planning. Her career goal is to be a vice-president or an academic chancellor in a large community college system. To plan for and pursue this goal, Allison remains active in as many professional organizations as possible. She continues to read and learn about higher education and the community colleges in order to stay active, to stay in the game.

Mentors also played a key role in Allison's professional development. Her first two mentors encouraged her to pursue a career in higher education, and more importantly, to consider a career in academic leadership. Her most influential mentor, President Michaelson, groomed Allison for the next step. She helped Allison recognize her strengths and weaknesses. Most importantly, she affirmed for Allison that she was ready to take the next step.

In an odd way, the backlash against women at Bayside Community College worked to Allison's benefit. Allison knew she wanted to pursue a senior academic administrative position. The turmoil and backlash at Bayside forced her into evaluating her professional career. It was time to leave because she could not function effectively in an environment in chaos. She left Bayside sooner than planned, but left for a senior position in a more positive environment. Finding the right fit was the key. Bayside had fit as long as President Michaelson was in charge. After President Michaelson left, the climate did not fit Allison's style. Thus, as she looked for the next opportunity, Allison was clear about the type of climate for which she was searching. The experience at Bayside had been beneficial; Allison knew what worked for her and what type of institutional culture she was seeking. Green Valley Community College fit. The style of management was collaborative and cooperative, matching Allison's management style. And the student-centered focus espoused by the president corresponded with Allison's notion of what constituted a good community college. Green Valley was the right college at the right time.

Allison was also the right person at the right time. Her background in developmental education was the key. Green Valley was looking for an academic administrator with experience in student support services. Allison had just spent the last 3.5 years of her administrative career developing support service programs for developmentally underprepared students. Green Valley fit Allison and Allison fit Green Valley.

Allison has a vision about what a community college should be and a vision about the role of the academic dean in the community college. She worked hard to attain the deanship and continues to work hard to be an effective dean. She has no desire to seek a presidency but does admit that in the future, she will pursue an academic vice-presidency at a larger institution.

> I've started building what I think will be a really good program with the closest high school to the college. Those kinds of strategies are important, those kinds of opportunities are important if you want the academic deans job because that's where you want to be.

Allison is committed to working in the community colleges because it is "real work." In her eyes, students are more capable of defining and achieving their academic goals at institutions with open door admission policies. A supporter of the types of educational and occupational programs offered at community colleges, "it is where the workforce will be trained," Allison's goal is to raise people's awareness of the value of a community college degree and to work to maintain the academic integrity of its programs. "I believe in the academic mission of the community college and so I want to support it in terms of helping it keep its integrity and also meet new workforce needs." She takes pride in being part of educational institutions that help adults achieve life changes and feels especially proud when students gain enough confidence to be more assertive and take control of their own lives.

> I like working with adults. I like the life change that happens when the light bulb comes on or when the self-confidence gets to a point where they walk through the dean's door and say "I'd like to talk to you about something." I meant that's always a good event. It's probably why I picked it [the academic dean's position].

Emerging Themes

All five respondents are committed to working in the community colleges. Even though the community colleges are often treated with disdain by others who see themselves as members of the academic elite, this attitude has not deterred these five women. Their work as academic leaders in the community colleges is important and makes a difference in people's lives. That is what drives them to seek leadership positions in the community colleges.

This commitment proved to be a positive factor in their career development. Because each woman wished to serve and was dedicated to offering opportunities to educationally and economically marginalized persons, each woman positioned herself well to move into a leadership position. Whether consciously or unconsciously, all five women positioned themselves to move up the academic administrative ladder. Allison and Nell deliberately pursued adjunct teaching positions in the community colleges to get experience in those types of institutions. Austin, Midge, and Josephine were all willing to take on extra tasks and responsibilities to serve, but at the same time, learn and experience as much as possible. Whatever the path taken to the top, all five of these women had positioned themselves well to move to senior academic administrative positions.

Finding the right fit was also key. Three of the respondents, Nell, Midge, and Josephine, built their academic careers within one institution; Allison and Austin came to their senior positions from the outside. How successfully they built their careers from within is directly related to how well the college's mission and culture matched each woman's sentiments as to the purpose of higher education. The mission at Sand Hill Community College and its commitment to allied health education fit Midge. Silver Bay's commitment to occupational programs and meeting the needs of the local community matched Josephine's vision of the purpose of higher education. And Mountain Lakes almost matriarchal environment, coupled with the college's mission to offer educational opportunities to everyone wishing to learn, matched Nell's educational vision and her desire to serve.

Successfully attaining a position from the outside (direct application to a vacant position) is also related to finding the right fit. For Austin, the large western community college system fit her career for the first 17 years; the system had a very diverse student population and faculty were represented by a collective bargaining unit. When Austin made the decision to move East, finding a college that fit her style was important. Twain Community College fit the bill; the student population is ethnically diverse and the faculty are represented by a union. Allison also was cognizant that she had to find the "right fit." However, Allison's vision of the right fit was different. Allison needed to find a college in which the culture and the senior leadership management style matched her style of cooperation and collaboration. The president

and the president's influence on the institutional culture at Green River Community College created a match.

Finding the right fit begs the question as to whether or not women's careers are serendipitous. Each woman was in the right place at the right time. However, they were in the right place because they chose to be there. They were working at institutions, or searching for positions in institutions, that fit their sentiments about the purpose of higher education, agreed with their styles of management, and/or matched the types of environments (student population and location) in which they desired to work. Conversely, when the colleges were looking for academic leaders, the skills and attributes of these five leaders fit. Their career success is part chance, being in the right place at the right time, and part design. By searching for the right fit, they positioned themselves well to be promoted to, or selected for, a senior position.

Education and life-long learning were important. Each woman grew professionally through her graduate work and each continues to participate in professional development opportunities. These professional development activities facilitate professional growth while ensuring professional vitality.

Mentors and support systems were also important to career growth and development. Allison, Midge, Austin, and Josephine all had mentors who encouraged them to strive for more, who encouraged them to never underestimate their potential. Nell did not have one specific mentor, however, she did have a support system of colleagues, family, and friends. These colleagues affirmed her intuitions and encouraged her to pursue the academic deanship and to take on the interim presidency.

In thinking about the personalities of each of these women, the question arises about whether or not one has to be competitive or aggressive to move up the senior academic administrative ladder. Each of the five respondents talked about being athletes and its role in developing competitive instincts. Midge played sports with her brother while growing up even though girls were not allowed to participate in team sports in her high school. Today, she is a competitive marathon runner. Austin never participated in sports as a child, girls were not allowed to do that. Today, she considers herself very athletic participating in biking and cross-country skiing. Midge and Nell participated in the only sport available for girls, cheerleading. Josephine was a swimmer and a basketball player. Allison, the only respondent to play high school and college sports, was a basketball player, a softball player, and a field hockey player. When they discussed their athletic pursuits, each of the five women defined themselves as competitive. This competitiveness carries over into their professional lives. Josephine said it best, "I am very competitive, I think that is a good thing."

However, being competitive does not mean that they cannot collaborate. All five of these women talked about collaboration and cooperation. Being competitive did not necessarily mean that they are selfish — working only for the good of themselves and not for the good of their institution. Because of their experiences as athletes, they are able to work to advance the team's (the institutions) fortunes. All five of these women are team players; they are less individually-oriented and more team-oriented. Josephine and Nell talked about how important it was to work with a team. Allison and Josephine used the word "integrate." They don't like to work in isolation, they

prefer to work in management teams. And even though they are competitive, they don't necessarily see themselves as aggressive. Allison said it best, "I am highly competitive, but I don't think I am particularly aggressive. I think I am real assertive. I don't think I am particularly aggressive, my style is much more collaborative. What I like is interaction with people." Their success is directly related to their ability to work well with people, to work well with a team.

The last case study, Beth, brings together many of the loose ends while shattering many of the myths about building a career in higher education. Beth is the only respondent to have spent more than half of her career at a university and more than half of her career in student affairs. This case study splinters Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, and Bragg's (1983) academic administrative career ladder while showcasing how idiosyncratic human behavior can be.

Beth

Beth is the Interim President, VP/Academic Dean, at Red Brick Community College. A quiet soft-spoken woman, Beth is warm and friendly and easy to talk with. However, behind this quiet exterior hides a very driven, high achieving woman. Beth set her sites on an educational leadership position over 30 years ago. Since that time she has pushed herself and carved a path to the senior level, criss-crossing academic and student affairs.

Raised in a large family of seven children in a very rural area of New England, Beth has moved her life beyond the expected role of the "typical northern woman."

She is a career woman who has taken charge of her life. She sets goals for herself and works diligently to bring them to fruition. And although she was academically aggressive and is career ambitious, she does not think of herself as competitive. "I think I was academically competitive and probably will always be one who wants to know a lot about a lot of things. But I just go along with my life without thinking whether I am competing or not."

Beth was not always so self-confident, periodically struggling with traditional gender norms. As a young child, her father, a very traditional northern New Englander, never placed limits on her because of her gender. As she grew into her teen years, however, he started very subtly telling her that a good woman stayed at home. This message was antithetical to the life she was designing for herself. Beth wanted to be a public school principal. She was intrigued with the idea of being a leader, of helping people build strong academic programs. "I used to think I would like to be the person making decisions, helping people, facilitating the making of decisions. I never perceived of myself as an autocrat. I always perceived of myself as a facilitator." To move in the direction of that goal, Beth pursued a teaching degree knowing that although teaching was not her chosen profession, it would position her to move into management. However, her father's message came back to haunt her. Beth married young. Her first husband wanted a traditional wife, a stay-at-home woman. Beth relinquished her teaching career to keep her marriage intact. Ironically, two years after she left teaching, her marriage dissolved anyway.

Today, even though she is a well-respected leader in higher education, gender issues still crop up. Beth recognizes that sometimes she can be her own worst enemy. If she thinks negative thoughts, she is very likely to fail. "I will only get half-way to where I want to be." Even after being offered the VP/Academic Dean position, Beth questioned whether a woman should be working in that type of position. "I couldn't believe it because I still had in the back of my mind that as a women I was going to have a very hard time." Horner (1972) described this as an unlikely motivation to avoid success. "When success is likely or possible, threatened by the negative consequences they expect to follow their success, women become anxious and their positive achievement strivings become thwarted" (p. 171). Beth deals with this by focusing on the positive. If she envisions success, she is likely to prevail. Her second husband, whom she describes as her best friend, helps her deal with this issue. When she is thinking negatively, he is able to talk her into thinking positively.

Beth is an interesting character in that she is an introvert who likes to talk. She was a child who was always better off by herself, a child who liked to play with one friend instead of a group of children. "I don't think I was shy, I don't think it was that. I wanted to be in charge of my own little world." As an introverted adult, she uses her tendency to listen before speaking very effectively. When she speaks, people listen knowing she has been thoughtful and has something interesting to offer. And even though she is introverted and is a quiet thinker, she likes to process verbally. "I am a person who needs to talk things through. I am a person who can change her mind once she has talked things through, once she has heard both sides of whatever it is."

Beth's personality, her characteristics, and her traits are appropriate for a person drawn to higher education leadership. She is an idealist who believes that education makes a difference in people's lives. She possesses a high degree of integrity and honesty. She is a creative thinker who is quick to perceive situations. This characteristic is essential for an administrator in charge of the academic side of the college, for the side of the house that develops programs in response to community needs. Her predilection to systems-thinking makes her the ideal administrator in a community college with strong ties to business and industry. "I tend to think holistically about things. I think that is what keeps this place [Red Brick Community College] so interesting. It is that connection to business and industry that is so long-term and strong." A down-to-earth, unpretentious woman, Beth has a management style and a personality that have helped her fashion a strong relationship with staff and students. She is a well respected administrator.

> I'm Beth around here. I am occasionally Doctor this, but I am Beth. The students refer to me as Beth. It is pretty interesting, when we are sitting around talking, they call me Beth. But depending where we are in a public setting, I become Doctor.

Presently, Beth is a finalist for the presidency at Red Brick Community College. When asked by the search team, "Why the presidency?" Beth responded, "If I get this job, I will realize a dream." It is a dream she has worked for both long and hard. Beth has spent 22 years in higher education administration striving to reach her goal.

Beth's Career Path

Beth started her career as a public school teacher. Her initial intentions in high school were to pursue a degree in science. Beth had been good in math and science in high school where she graduated valedictorian. She applied to the university to study life science and agriculture, but these plans changed. She ended up in teacher education for financial reasons. Beth's mother, a teacher, was the primary supporter of her family. Beth's father worked independently as a handyman, and Beth is the youngest of seven children. It became clear to Beth that her mother could not afford to send her to the university so she chose instead to attend the local teacher's college.

Beth taught for 6.5 years at a public school. The more she taught, the more she thought that she would like to be the supervisor. Beth recognized early on that she liked management more than teaching. As a child, she had toyed with the idea of running a school. She recalls watching the principal at her grammar school and thinking that she would really like to someday have his job. His scope of impact was great, and she was attracted to the idea of being able to influence the entire operation of a school. However, Beth encountered a roadblock in her pursuit of a principalship. Her marriage to her first husband was becoming "rockier and rockier." He wanted her to stay at home and "take care of him." So after 6.5 years of teaching, Beth resigned to become a traditional, stay-at-home wife.

This career hiatus lasted only six months and played a positive role in shaping her next career decision. During that six month period, Beth realized that she needed to stay active, so she took courses at the local university. The local campus is one of

four satellite campuses of the state university system. At the end of the spring semester, a grant-funded position as Coordinator of a Bicultural/Bilingual Human Services Program was advertised at the university. Beth applied for the position and was hired. She spent the next two years working with adult women learners. Through this position, her first taste of higher education, she knew that she wanted to be working with adults in education. She realized that she was not happy as a grammar school teacher because she did not like working with children. In retrospect today, she recognizes that she used her husband as an excuse to leave a profession she really did not enjoy.

> The job was with the university and it was with a state-wide consortium. That was my first taste of higher education and the thing that I found is that I enjoyed working with adults far more than I enjoyed working with grammar school age kids. I think that is why I was able to leave teaching. I used the husband as the excuse to get out of a career that I really wasn't enjoying.

In the spring of 1978 three significant events occurred in Beth's life. The grant ended and Beth was without a job. At the same time she made the decision to leave her husband and go to the main campus of the university to pursue a masters degree in counseling. She was at the university for less than two weeks when she got a phone call informing her that the Director of Admissions at the satellite campus had passed away and the Dean of Students wanted Beth to return. She returned and spent three years serving as Director of Admissions.

Although Beth had left the masters program at the main campus, she continued to take advantage of long-distance learning courses. After three years serving as Director of Admissions, she knew she had to move on. She wanted to move higher in the university administration and realized that in order to do so, she needed to further her education. Her mentor and supervisor, Donald, the Dean of Students, encouraged her to return to graduate school full-time.

Because Beth had been taking graduate courses while working as Director of Admissions, she was able to complete her masters degree in one year. At the end of her masters degree program in Counselor Education, Beth made the decision to continue on and pursue a doctorate. She had developed a taste for higher education and realized that her career aspirations had changed. She set her sights on becoming a college president. She knew she needed the doctorate degree to pursue that goal.

Beth remained professionally active throughout her doctoral program in Counselor Education/Administration. She worked in a series of positions in the financial aid office, starting as a financial aid advisor and moving up to the Assistant Director for Scholarships. She deliberately moved into financial aid because she knew she wanted to learn more about this aspect of higher education; she wanted to broaden her scope of knowledge within student affairs.

> The main reason why I wanted to work in that office [financial aid] was I knew that most of my roles as Director of Admissions had been saying "yes" to students. I felt that by going into the financial aid office, I would learn to say "no" in a number of different ways.

While she was completing her doctoral dissertation, a position as Associate Dean for Student Services was advertised at the university. She realized she couldn't "miss that opportunity." She applied for the position and was hired. She spent the next year coordinating the activities of the student life staff and serving as Campus Retention Officer. During that time, Beth was approached by the Vice President of one of the local, private four-year colleges. The college was looking to recruit a Dean for Enrollment Management. The VP approached Beth and asked her to apply for the position. This was the first time Beth had been actively pursued, and she was flattered.

> It was a very attractive offer and so I applied for the position. I probably knew ahead of time that I had a really good chance even though it was an open search. It is interesting because it is the only position that I have ever taken where someone has come to me and said, "Why don't you apply for the job."

Obviously, for the dean to actively pursue Beth, her reputation was well known within the community. She had proven herself as a very competent administrator at the university.

After about four months as Dean of Enrollment Management, Beth started to become disillusioned with higher education. The promises she had been made and the information she had been given in the interview were not entirely accurate. It was becoming harder and harder to get up each morning and drive to work. She was frustrated, unhappy, and worn out. "I was really tired. I think at that point in my life I was really tired because I had taken so many risks and had pushed myself so rapidly. I was really out of focus." After mulling over how she felt about the college and

realizing that the position was not leading her where she wanted to go, Beth resigned. She returned to the farm that she and her second husband owned and kept herself busy tending the horses and making maple syrup.

Beth is quick to point out that her husband was more discouraged than she. He likes to see her active; he likes her to be working. Beth had finally married a man who understood and recognized her career aspirations. He supported those aspirations and he wanted her to continue on with her career. But Beth needed the time to regroup and decide what she wanted to do next. She continued to peruse the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, waiting for the right opportunity to present itself.

Six months after she resigned as Dean of Enrollment Management, a position was posted for a counselor at Red Brick Community College. Beth thought, "well, you went to school to become a counselor, right? Why not get back in touch with the students?" Beth returned to higher education and, for the first time, stepped in the doors of a community college.

As Coordinator of the Student Services Center, Beth was responsible for taking a counseling center that was avoided by students and turning it into a "very acceptable place." She worked very hard, as she had always done, and made certain that she was a very visible presence on the campus. Red Brick Community College is a small community college located in northern New England. The college's mission is to provide educational programs that meet the occupational and technical needs of the state and to promote regional and state-wide economic development. The college

offers 16 associate degree programs, six two-year diploma programs, and seven one-year certification programs.

One year later, the Assistant to the Academic Dean left the college. Beth approached the Dean and asked if she could do a couple of projects for his office. She was so successful in those projects that when the assistant position was advertised, Beth successfully competed for the job. It was a low paying job, but that was irrelevant. Beth knew that if she wanted to get back on track and pursue a presidency, she needed experience in academic affairs. She used this position to get that experience. "I knew from my reading that if I wanted to be a college president, I needed to get into academic affairs somehow." She had leaped off of the student affairs career ladder and had begun her ascent up the academic affairs career ladder (see Figure 9). Figure 9 shows Beth's age corresponding to the number of years spent in each professional position.

Beth spent the next three years working closely with the faculty and with faculty affairs. She served as liaison between the faculty and the senior administration. She wrote Perkins grant proposals and grant reports. She assisted in the development of articulation agreements with the local high schools. And she actively participated on program advisory boards. She was so successful that when the VP/Academic Dean asked for a one year sabbatical, Beth was asked to serve as Acting VP/Academic Dean. When the VP returned from sabbatical, the president realized that he could not return Beth to the Assistant to the Dean position and named her Assistant Academic Dean.

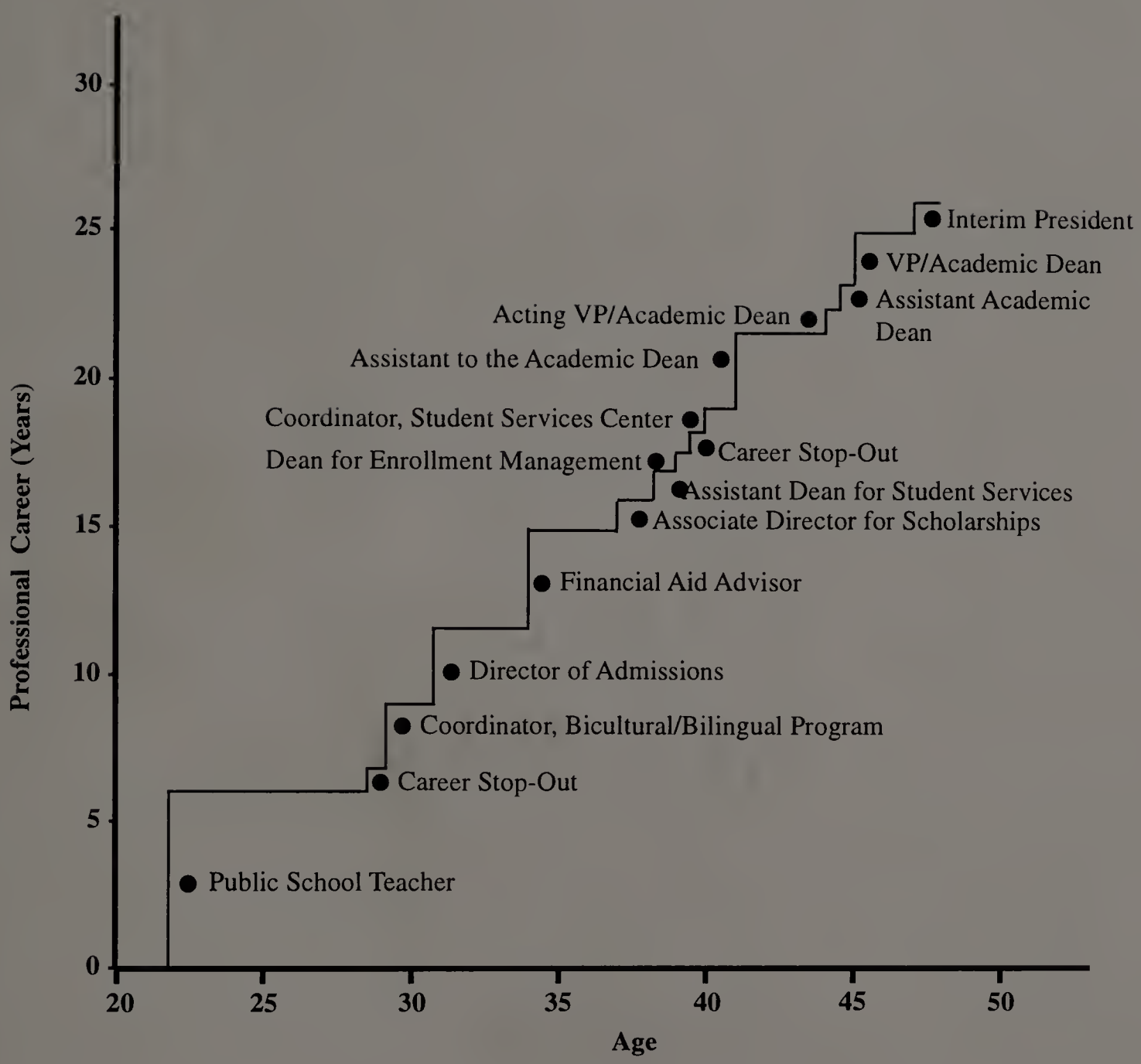

Figure 9
Beth's Career Path

Six months later, the VP/Academic Dean decided that he wanted to return to the faculty. The president of the college opened up a national search. Even though he felt it was important to conduct a national search, he encouraged Beth to apply for the position, and she successfully competed. After 22 years in higher education, Beth had finally climbed to the senior level. Two years later, the president left Red Brick for an opportunity in the South to develop a new community college. Beth was asked to serve as Interim President and has been in that position ever since.

Beth's climb to the academic deanship is unusual. Her career started in student affairs, climbing up that ladder to a senior position. However, she knew that she wanted to be a college president so she consciously made the move into academic affairs. Her academic affairs career was also nontraditional. Beth never served as a faculty member; rather, she moved up through the ranks via a series of positions on the academic affairs ladder. She proved herself as a competent and effective academic administrator. She positioned herself to gain the experience and reputation necessary to become the senior academic officer. "So that is how I became VP/Academic Dean; not from within the faculty or academic ranks, but through a series of administrative positions, learning opportunities, I guess."

Building an Administrative Career

Obviously, Beth is a high achiever. As a child, she was a high achieving student who liked school. "I liked school, I liked learning, I liked studying." She was so successful and so driven that she graduated valedictorian of her high school class.

Beth toyed with the idea of managing a school at a very early age. She watched the principal and thought she would like to be in his position. She liked the scope of impact he had on the day-to-day operation of the school. "That was a thread that was in my life from an early age. I kind of liked the idea of how much this man was impacting everything. So I think the seed was always there [to be an educational leader]." As a public school teacher, she toyed with the idea of being the superintendent.

Beth's career aspirations shifted once she began working in higher education. She realized she like working with adults better than with children. Thus, rather than aim for a principalship, Beth's slightly altered her career goals, she now aimed for a college presidency. "When I entered my graduate program and started working in higher education, the focus of what leadership role I wanted in education became clearer to me. I wanted to become the president of a small college."

Even though she is a high achiever, Beth knew that she had to come up with some strategies to achieve her goal. She wasn't going to become a college president just because she wanted to be one — she had to prove herself as an administrator and she had to acquire relevant experience.

Seeking Opportunities and Turning Them into Learning Experiences

Educational leaders have acquired a breadth of knowledge and experience. Beth was cognizant of this fact. Once she set her sights on climbing the administrative ladder, she sought out learning opportunities. Upon completion of her masters degree,

Beth chose to remain in school to complete her doctorate. To be a college president, it was necessary to possess the "union card." And while the doctoral program would provide her with the credentials to be a college president, Beth used this opportunity to gain a breadth of experience. Through her doctoral program, Beth was required to complete internships at the university. She sought out internships where she would acquire new knowledge. "I have always in education sampled and learned and made sure that I had internships in different areas. And I had a lot of internships and a lot of opportunities to work in different areas." Professionally, Beth had been a Director of Admissions. She chose an internship in financial aid because it was the opportunity to learn about another aspect of higher education.

After taking a career stop-out and getting refocused, Beth once again set her sights on a college presidency. She knew she needed experience in academic affairs, so she sought out those types of opportunities at Red Brick Community College. She applied for the Assistant to the Academic Dean position, not because it was a step up the administrative ladder, but because it would get her experience in academic affairs.

> So he [the president] advertised the position which was Assistant to the Academic Dean. It was a low pay, not a high paying position. The counseling position was not high paying either. But that wasn't relevant to me at the time. I was just getting experience.

She used this job as a means of getting closer to faculty and involved in faculty affairs issues. She worked closely with the faculty, setting up schedules and academic programs. She asked the Dean for special projects and volunteered to serve on

program advisory boards, learning as much as possible about occupational education. Each experience prepared her for the next step up the academic administrative ladder. Beth deliberately garnered the appropriate experience to set herself up as a viable candidate for the VP/Academic Dean position. She successfully competed among a large pool of national candidates because she had proven herself as a competent and effective administrator.

> I know I competed because I know who else they had for a finalist and I know the qualifications of that person. And I knew that I had stiff competition regardless of my history with the school. I knew people but I think I competed on the merit of my work and my experience. I think having a broad based experience, you know people look at the resume and say, "Gee she's done this and this and this, and she's had experience with this," I think all of that experience helped.

Besides seeking learning opportunities in each position, Beth also sought out the right people. She made it a point to get to know everyone on campus, including the president. Her mentor, Donald, used to tease her about her about this. When she moved from the small satellite campus to the large, main campus at the university, he inquired, "I suppose you have gotten to know everyone there down at the university, haven't you Beth?" She did not set any boundaries for herself. She got to know people and used these relationships to open up doors to opportunities.

To this day, Beth believes that her vast experiences are more important than her doctoral degree. "I knew one thing, the degrees were going to be one thing. Everything else, the experiences I gained through internships, the skills, getting to know people, participating, that would often weigh heavier than most degree

programs." She actively sought out opportunities and turned them into learning experiences.

Making Safe Choices and Taking Risks

Resigning as Dean of Enrollment without having another job lined up was a big risk. Beth knew that walking away from that job could have compromised her future in academia. But Beth is a risk-taker, admitting "You know, I have taken every risk as it has come up." She understood that there were very few jobs in the area where she and her second husband had chosen to live. However, Beth knew that in order to retain her sanity and her integrity, she needed to walk away from the situation. In retrospect, she recognizes what a risk it was. "I would never again leave a job without something ahead of me."

Choosing the doctoral program at the university was both a safe choice and a risk. Beth chose to stay at the university because she owned property in the area and was not ready to give it up. She acknowledged that there were more renowned doctoral programs in her field outside of New England but she chose the university because it was a safe, familiar place. It was a risk; a doctoral program at a university with a better reputation might have better served her career.

> Some of that is maybe reflected in that I took some safe choices but I took risks too. The university was a choice. I could have just sold everything and gone out of state, but this is where I wanted to be. I could have been at those magical wonderful places where people were doing great research. But I owned a lot of things in the area and I made the decision to not give them up.

She took the risk, and the risk paid off. She gained a breadth of experience in many aspects of higher education through her internships. This breadth of knowledge and experience filled her resume, making her the logical choice as she competed for positions on the administrative ladder.

Help Along the Way

As a child, Beth had numerous relationships with older persons. She was drawn to these individuals because they "saw potential in her and encouraged that potential." One woman in particular, whom Beth considers her most important role model, was an older woman from the neighborhood where Beth was raised. The lesson Beth learned from this woman was, "Treat others as you would like to be treated." This message plays in the back of Beth's mind whenever she has to make important personnel decisions. It is a lesson she has never forgotten and one that guides her management decisions.

Beth had a number of male mentors and no female mentors. Her first mentor, an English professor from undergraduate school, encouraged her to write. To this day, he still encourages her to put her writing skills to work writing creatively and for pleasure. Another mentor, an advisor at the university during her doctoral studies, encouraged her to "get time on task." His message was to find ways to apply the skills and knowledge learned in graduate school. Another mentor encouraged her to stretch and push herself to strive for goals.

Beth's most significant mentor was her supervisor at the satellite campus of the university. Donald was always encouraging Beth to "excel, to take risks, to do things." He supported all of her personal and career decisions. When Beth realized that it was time for her to leave the satellite campus and return to graduate school, Donald supported her decision. "He knew that I wanted more education and he was always supportive of that. So he encouraged me to pursue that education." Donald also taught Beth that everyone is replaceable; each employee has different skills and talents to offer to an organization. Beth has remembered that lesson. When she encounters a situation in which an employee has made the choice to leave, she is saddened by the loss. But she remembers that everyone is replaceable, seeing that the next employee will bring something new and different to the organization.

Beth sought out male mentors almost unconsciously. Even though she started her career in secondary education, Beth had come to know that secondary education was not the career for her. So she sought out male mentors because they did not represent a teaching career. These mentors also offered Beth the type of relationship she craved. Beth needs to process verbally. Her mentors were men with whom she could effectively communicate. "There was just this ability to sit there and talk with them about things. They were willing to listen, willing to process." She doesn't ever remember any of them telling her that she could not do something because she was a woman. They encouraged and affirmed for her that she was a "bright, capable administrator." And she needed these mentors to affirm her potential because she does

not always recognize her own strengths. Via their guidance and encouragement, Beth developed self-confidence and her resolve to succeed was strengthened.

Life-Long Learning

"Everything is a learning experience. Everything is a professional growth activity for me." Beth attends numerous conferences and seminars. She has presented at the American Association of Community College's national conference and the Leadership 2000 conference. Being active at the national level allows her to stretch her reach outside of her small community. She is cognizant that life-long learning is important to career growth and development. She stays active because she wishes to remain professionally vital.

Beth is an active member of the chamber of commerce. Through chamber meetings, she keeps her finger on the pulse of the local community. She understands local economic needs and works with the college to develop programs to meet those needs. Her involvement serves as a learning experience and another professional growth activity.

> I work with the chamber. It is very exciting to be connected to the economic welfare and growth of the state so directly, to see it so tangibly. I think that only happens at the community colleges. I think a lot of the future lies right here in these buildings.

Summary

Clearly, Beth knew early on that she wanted a career as an academic leader. She worked incessantly to get herself to that point. After leaving secondary teaching and embarking on a career in higher education, Beth spent 10 years working in student affairs. She knew she needed experience in academic affairs to achieve a presidency, so she very consciously pursued those types of opportunities. Obviously, Beth is a planner and a high-achiever who is career-driven. She has strong career aspirations; 22 years ago she set her sights on becoming an academic leader and since that time, has worked diligently to achieve her goal.

Although Beth realized she needed a breadth of experience to achieve a presidency, she is also someone who likes to stick her finger in every piece of the pie. She likes to learn, she likes to be challenged, she likes to remain professionally active. She is a life-long learner. Her experiences on both sides of the house, academic affairs and student affairs, were crucial to her career development. Through each position, she gained knowledge and experience to move to the next step. Beth believes that her vast array of experiences have been more important to her career than her education. Her resume is lengthy and comprehensive, persuading search committees to see her as a logical choice. And although she has achieved a senior academic position, she remains professionally active. She attends conferences, presents workshops, and is an active member of the local chamber of commerce. Each one of the professional development activities serves a purpose. Her final career goal is to become a president. She needs the exposure and the experience to achieve this goal. She uses

these professional development activities to get to know the right people — the people who will advance her career.

A planner and high-achiever, Beth positioned herself well to become an academic leader. She used her doctoral internship to experience many of the aspects of student affairs administration. She moved from admissions to financial aid to pad her curriculum vitae. She knew a breadth of experience would be beneficial to her career. Beth also knew that to achieve her goal of attaining a presidency, she needed experience in academic affairs. Since she did not have experience as a faculty member, Beth accepted a position as Assistant to the Dean of Academic Affairs. This was a low-paying, low-level management position. That did not matter; it was all part of the master plan. Beth knew from reading the higher education literature that college presidents generally come from the academic side of the house. Taking a low-paying, low-level management position in academic affairs was crucial; she acquired the experience she lacked.

Traditional gender stereotyping and gender roles almost hindered Beth's career. Beth's father tried to convince her that a good woman was a stay-at-home wife. His message was strong. Beth had wanted a career as an academic leader from a very early age, however, her father's message came back to haunt her. This message was reinforced when her first husband wanted a traditional wife. Beth gave up her teaching career and her first career goal of being a principal to be a stay-at-home wife. She succumbed to the power and pervasiveness of the dominant culture. Ironically, this worked to her advantage. She started taking courses at the local university and realized

that she wanted to build a career in higher education. Two years later she left her husband and embarked on that career path.

Obviously, Beth is a risk-taker; she recognizes opportunities and is not afraid to pursue them. Her greatest risk was taking a second career time-out. Beth realized leaving her position as Dean of Enrollment at the private college could effectively terminate her career. However, it was a risk she was willing to take, and this career stop-out worked to Beth's advantage. Her next job was at Red Brick Community College. Beth had come home. She had found the type of college she was looking for. Beth is a systems thinker who understands how education can enhance the local economy. The mission of Red Brick Community College was just that: to provide educational programs that meet the occupational and technical needs of the state and to promote regional and state-wide economic development. She was intrigued with the college and, in particular, with the types of programs offered at the school. She then set her sights on a community college presidency.

Mentors played a significant role in Beth's career. They encouraged her to stretch herself, to learn as much as possible, and to take risks. They affirmed her potential and they helped her map out career strategies. They were also good listeners and good processors. Beth communicated well with these men and employed their advice to make career decisions. Donald was the most influential. He opened up doors of opportunity for Beth by offering her the Director of Admission position working directly for him. Most importantly, he encouraged her to fly free when it was time for her to move upward.

Although Beth spent the first 17 years of her career working at the university, her career path has shifted to the community colleges. Beth is an idealist dedicated to the types of programs and opportunities offered at the community colleges. She envisions the community colleges as places where there are "wonderful opportunities to show pathways to people, to mentor people, to serve as a role model." Red Brick Community College feels like home. The college offers education as Beth perceives education ought to be offered.

> When I walked into this college and saw the students, I felt like a great weight was lifted off of my shoulders. This was education as it ought to be, the way it was offered in this environment. It is a new environment in that the school is only 27 years old. It is poised and ready for change. I think there are a lot of aspirations that are raised in this type of environment and I think that is why the weight went off of my shoulders. People are here because they really want to be here. I think a lot of the future lies right here in these buildings.

Emerging Themes

Many common themes emerged from the data. As expected, not every respondent fit every pattern. However, many commonalities existed. The interpretations and working hypotheses garnered from these common themes should provide the reader with enough tools to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon of career development.

Working Hard

Clearly, all six of these women are hard workers. They are willing to go the extra mile if it benefits their students and their institutions. They also know that being a hard worker benefits their careers. Josephine adopted the Protestant work ethic; if you work hard and are productive, you will be rewarded appropriately. Although never consciously interested in building a career, via her hard work and her desire to serve her institution, Josephine crafted a career up the academic administrative ladder. As Beth, Austin, Midge, Nell, and Allison recognized that they desired a senior administrative position, they diligently worked to achieve that goal. Through hard work, they gained a breadth of experience and depth of knowledge. Each experience gained and lesson learned prepared them for the next step on the academic administrative ladder.

Being Committed

Much of their inclination to hard work is grounded in their desire to serve. These women have chosen careers in the community colleges because they are committed to institutions whose missions are to ensure access to opportunities and to train the workforce. Even Beth, who began her career at a university, feels at home. "They [the community colleges] are wonderful places to show pathways to people, to mentor people, and to serve as a role model." All six of these women are professionally fulfilled at institutions that offer educational opportunities to persons oftentimes marginalized by society: persons who are economically disadvantaged or

academically disadvantaged. Their work as academic leaders in the community colleges is important — it makes a difference in people's lives. They have dedicated their professional careers to helping people make personal changes and take control of their own destinies.

A Competitive Nature

Juxtaposed against this desire to serve is a competitive drive. These women are very competitive. They were athletes as young adults, and most continue to participate in some type of athletic endeavor as middle-aged women. Even though Midge, Josephine, Nell, Beth, and Austin grew up in a time when girls did not participate in inter-scholastic athletics, each of these women found ways to participate as athletes or expressed a desire to compete. The youngest respondent, Allison, was the only woman to participate in both high school and college sports. Allison was a softball player, basketball player, and field hockey player. Midge played hockey and baseball with her brother and his friends. Josephine played basketball with her male cousins and assisted the boys swim coach so she could learn to swim. Midge and Nell were cheerleaders, the only athletic opportunity available to them. Austin wanted to play competitive tennis and run track and field, but the opportunities were not available. Today, many of them continue to pursue athletics. Midge is a competitive marathon runner. Nell and Austin cross-country ski and bicycle. Beth is a scuba diver and a sky diver, and she is currently learning to become an airplane pilot.

This affinity for competition carries over into their professional lives. Josephine said, "I am very competitive. I think it is a good thing." Allison said, "I am highly competitive." However, their competitiveness does not hinder their ability to be cooperative and collaborative. Being competitive does not necessarily mean that they are selfish. In fact, their experiences with team sports have augmented their ability to be team players. They are less individual-oriented and more team-oriented. This has played an important role in their career growth and development. Their success is directly related to their ability to work well with people. They are able to work for the common good of, and advance the fortunes of, the team (the institution). This has been particularly important for Midge, Josephine, Beth, Nell, and Austin, who developed much of their career within one institution. By working for the greater good of the institution, they worked for the greater good of their careers.

A Growth in Self-Confidence

Although they are competitive, most of these women started their careers with very little self-confidence. With time and experience, their self-confidence grew. Today, each of the respondents is a poised professional who speaks and carries herself very confidently. Mentors played an important role in facilitating this process. Midge's mentor, the president at Sand Hill Community College, affirmed her potential. He told her she had the ability to be an academic administrator. Without his encouragement, Midge might never have finished the doctorate or pursued the academic deanship. Austin's first mentor, Bill, did the same for her. His message

was, "Never underestimate your potential." Nell, who did not have a specific mentor, turned to colleagues and friends for affirmation. And Beth's first mentor, Donald, encouraged her to strive for greater heights. Even Allison, who was very self-confident from an early age, needed the affirmation of President Michaelson as she pursued the academic deanship. Thus, as their careers flourished, so did their self-confidence. And as their self-confidence grew, so did their career drive. Growth in self-assurance and career success went hand-in-hand; as each woman became more self-assured, she was able to take on the next challenge and move up the administrative career ladder.

The Influence of Mentors

Besides assisting in the growth of self-confidence, mentors championed the career development of their proteges. Josephine's early mentors taught her how to be a professional and encouraged her to consider a career in higher education. Her later mentors were her teachers; she learned how to be an effective administrator from these men. Allison's early mentors encouraged her to pursue a career in academic leadership. Austin's two female mentors, Madeline and Jean, pushed her to envision herself as an academic leader.

Oftentimes, mentors opened up doors of opportunity for these women. Midge's mentor never outright offered her positions; instead, he made her go through the interview process. He knew this experience would assist her professional growth. And he knew that each time she would be selected for the position because he had

groomed her well for the next step. Beth's mentor, Donald, asked her to return to be the Director of Admissions under his tutelage. And Austin's mentor, Joan, promoted her to Dean of Continuing Education. Most likely, these women would have risen to the senior ranks without the assistance of their mentors. The affirmation and confirmation from mentors and colleagues, combined with this access to opportunities provided by mentors, expedited the process.

Interestingly enough, most of these mentors were male. This is indicative of the time in which these women first started building their careers. There were very few women at the senior ranks, so they had to find men who were interested in women's career growth. Other than the female mentor Josephine had when she was an undergraduate student, all of her mentors have been males; the senior staff at Silver Bay Community College has been almost exclusively male. Josephine believes these men were not gender-biased. They recognized her skills and encouraged her talents. They provided her with the experiences necessary to broaden her horizons and expand her knowledge base. Midge's only mentor was a male. His affirming messages about her skills and abilities proved to be very important to her career growth and development. Austin's first mentor, Bill, took her under his wing. He gave her opportunities to grow and gain experience because he knew she was talented and wanted to learn as much as possible. He encouraged her to be career-driven. Austin's current mentor, Jack, is helping her search for a college presidency. All of Beth's mentors have been men. These were men with whom she could communicate, with whom she could have a conversation about career choices and career development.

Education and Life-Long Learning: The Keys to Success

Without a doubt, education is key to success. Many of the respondents referred to the doctorate as the "union card" necessary to achieve a senior academic administrative position. But the doctorate was more than just a union card. Whether it was a doctoral program in academic leadership, or as in Nell's case, an M.F.A. in Writing, each woman grew professionally and intellectually through her graduate studies. Austin clearly articulated the importance of her doctorate: "it was crucial to my career, but also to my development as a human being." In graduate school these women gained self-confidence in their abilities as academic leaders. Their critical thinking and speaking skills flourished. They proved themselves as academicians.

Professional development and life-long learning were also keys to success. Even though most have completed their professional studies, these women continue to pursue professional development opportunities. Professional development and life-long learning serve two purposes. Some of these women use these experiences as tools for climbing the administrative ladder. Midge went to HERS because she knew she would be surrounded by female academic leaders who could serve as a network and help her build her career. Austin joined an academic think-tank; she knows this will prove that she is a skilled academic leader. Beth attends conferences, presents workshops, and is an active member of the chamber of commerce. Each one of these professional development activities serves a purpose. Beth's career goal is to be a college president. She needs the exposure and experience to achieve that goal.

For others, professional development and life-long learning enhance their effectiveness as academic leaders. Allison is an avid reader. She keeps abreast of what is happening in all of the academic programs at her college. Staying intellectually aware and vital enhances her effectiveness as an academic dean. Josephine attends professional development activities that will benefit her institution. For instance, she is a member of the local Society of Manufacturing Engineers because of the resources they can supply. Nell continues to write both for pleasure and for professional growth. Being a good writer and a good speaker makes her a good academic dean.

Positioning Oneself

Oftentimes when women are asked, "How did you get to where you are?," they reply, "I was in the right place at the right time." Clearly the data shows this is somewhat true. But, what is more significant, is not that they were in the right place at the right time, but that each was the right person at the right time. Each one of these respondents positioned herself well to move up the academic administrative ladder. Whether deliberatly or not so deliberatly, each of these women positioned herself to move to the senior ranks. Josephine, who articulated that she was never consciously building a career, nonetheless positioned herself well. She accepted each assignment and each interim position because it was for "the greater good of the institution." But in the back of her mind she knew, "the institutional orientation will bring the others [professional growth]." Midge and Austin had very linear career paths, stepping on every rung of the academic administrative ladder described by Moore, Salimbene,

Marlier, and Bragg (1983). They positioned themselves for the next position by gaining as much experience as possible in the previous position.

Allison, Nell, and Beth's careers were a bit different. Nell started her career in human services. She moved from an administrative position in human services to an administrative position in higher education. In both positions, she proved herself as a leader. At Mountain Lakes Community College, she proved herself as an academic leader. Thus, when the academic dean position became vacant, she was the obvious choice. She was in the right place at the right time, but she was also the right person at the right time. Allison had established herself as a well-respected professional in developmental education. However, all of her experience had at been at the university. Carefully planning her next move, Allison took an adjunct teaching position at the local community college. She knew she wanted an administrative position in the community colleges. By teaching part-time at a community college, she positioned herself to move from a faculty position in developmental education at the university to an administrative position at a community college where she was in charge of all academic student support services. When Green River Community College was looking for an academic dean to develop their academic student support services, Allison was the right person for the job.

Beth moved from student affairs to academic affairs. Like Allison, Beth is a careful planner. She used her doctoral internships to gain experience in many of the aspects of student affairs administration. Beth knew a breadth of experience was key to achieving success in administration. Once Beth moved into administration in the

community colleges, she knew she needed experience in academic affairs. Never a faculty member, she accepted a low-level management position as Assistant to the Academic Dean to gain academic affairs experience. As she moved up the ladder, she positioned herself well for the next step. She proved herself as an academic leader; she was the right person at the right time.

Therefore, these leaders' careers were not as serendipitous as they sometimes would like others to believe. They worked hard and positioned themselves well. As they say, they were in the right place at the right time; but more importantly, they were the right person at the right time.

Finding the Right Fit

Besides positioning oneself for the next position, finding the right fit is also key. Three of the respondents, Nell, Midge, and Josephine built their entire academic career in one institution. Austin spent most of her career in one large community college system. She applied, and was selected for the academic deanship at Twain Community College after making the decision to move East. Allison crafted her career in three institutions: a large state university, Bayside Community College, and Green River Community College. Beth spent more than half of her higher education career at the university, and half at Red Brick Community College. Whether starting their career in the community college, or coming to the community college from the university, all six of these women articulated that they were committed to the type of

education offered in the community colleges. The college's mission matched each woman's beliefs about the purpose of higher education. It was the right fit.

To build a career from within, as Nell, Midge, Josephine, and essentially Austin did, the college had to fit. Midge, who started her career as a nursing instructor, built her career at Sand Hill Community College. The types of programs offered at Sand Hill were conducive to Midge's inter-institutional career growth. Sand Hill's mission is to offer educational programs to meet local community economic needs. The School of Allied Health is the largest division at the college. The college fit Midge. The president at the college had also nurtured an institutional culture that encouraged people to strive to reach their potential and, more particularly, a culture that encouraged and supported women. The culture was ripe for a woman to develop an administrative career.

Josephine spent her entire career at Silver Bay Community College. The mission of the college is to offer access to educational opportunities and to train the workforce. The mission and culture fit Josephine. Josephine is devoted to occupational education and to providing students with educational opportunities that ensure their success. "The important thing is that students get a well-rounded education and that they be able to move forward and hopefully be as fortunate as I have been." Silver Bay Community College fit Josephine. Nell envisions the purpose of higher education in much the same way as Josephine. Mountain Lakes fits Nell because the college "truly embraces its access mission."

After spending 17 years at the university, Beth shifted her career to Red Brick Community College. She had "come home." An idealist, Beth is dedicated to the types of programs and opportunities offered at the community colleges. The college offers education as Beth perceives education ought to be offered. Red Brick Community College fits; the mission matches Beth's sentiments as to the purpose of higher education.

Although Austin and Allison are also committed to the type of education offered at the community colleges, finding the right fit meant something different for these two women. Austin calls herself a "proletarian," who is also a "frustrated cultural anthropologist." She thrives in a multicultural environment, particularly because she is committed to offering educational opportunities to persons who have been marginalized by society. Austin is also happiest working in a college where the faculty are represented by a collective bargaining unit. When she made the decision to move east with her husband, Austin searched for a college with an ethnically diverse student population and a unionized faculty. Twain Community College, a large inner-city college fit the bill. The location and the responsibilities of the academic dean's position played into all of Austin's passions and her strengths.

For Allison, finding the right fit meant finding an institution in which the management style of the senior team matched her style of collaboration and cooperation. Allison was clear about the type of climate and culture for which she was looking. The president's management style as well as the president's influence on the

institutional culture at Green River Community College was the right fit, it matched Allison's style.

Thus, positioning oneself well is important to shaping an academic career in higher education. But, to position themselves, these women needed to be in colleges that matched who they were as individuals and their beliefs about the purposes of higher education. To be in the right place at the right time, each had to be the right person at the right time. And being the right person in the right place meant finding the right fit.

Dealing with Traditional Gender Roles and Stereotyping

Even though these women have been very successful in their careers, some sacrifices and personal choices had to be made to reach their career goals. The data clearly reveals how pervasive and powerful the dominant culture was in influencing most of these women's careers. Ironically, institutional barriers based on gender stereotyping were not the issue. The message of the dominant culture, placing women in the private domain before the public domain, created internalized gender barriers for many of these women. It is no surprise that five of the six women chose traditional occupations as their first career choice. Austin and Beth started their careers as teachers. Midge started as a nurse. Nell's first degree was in English, and Josephine's first degree was in Secretarial Science. All five of these women chose careers based on the traditional gender stereotyping. However, gender stereotyping never created a barrier for Allison, the youngest respondent. Her first degree was in English, a typical

woman's degree. Her choice of English was about self, not about career. Coming from a professional family, Allison was always encouraged to pursue whatever career she chose. In fact, her mother wanted her to be an attorney.

For a period of time, Midge, Beth, and Austin were stuck in the dominant culture of the 1960s and 1970s. They chose traditional female roles because of the strong influence of their parents and society. Midge chose nursing because her father had assured her that it was a good career in which she could "support her family if anything ever happened to her husband." Midge chose teaching over clinical work because it was conducive to raising a family. She stayed at one college for her entire career because she never thought to move anywhere to build a career; Midge believed that a woman supported her husband's career. Society's message about the appropriate role for women was so strong that it almost prevented a talented woman from achieving. Her mentor was very important. His nongendered message about her talent and her skills, as well as his encouragement to achieve, helped Midge break free of the dominant culture. As she did so, Midge was able to grow professionally and make the difficult career choices necessary to realize her career goals.

Beth's career was almost cut short by the pervasiveness of the dominant culture. Although Beth's father raised her to be a strong woman, he also raised her to believe that a woman's place was in the home. When her first husband decided he wanted a stay-at-home, traditional wife, Beth left her job as a secondary teacher. Ironically, this worked to her advantage. Succumbing to her husband's wishes was a significant event in Beth's life. To keep from being bored at home, Beth started taking classes at the

local university. Six months later she accepted a position at the university. Two years later, her marriage dissolved, and Beth embarked upon a career in higher education.

Traditional gender stereotyping has intermittently created internalized barriers to Austin's success. Even though she has successfully risen to a senior academic position, she still questions whether women belong: "Can I be a college president? Can women be successful as college presidents?" Bill, Austin's first mentor, was important in encouraging her to recognize her potential. Madeline and Joan, Austin's two female mentors, continuously remind her that she is a talented woman and that a woman can succeed in higher education. These mentors helped Austin shake free from society's message and, more importantly, from her mother's messages about the roles of women in society.

What confounds the argument about whether or not traditional gender stereotyping limits women's careers is that most of these women chose to take on women's roles. They were choices that fit. Women are forced to make these types of choices because society deems that a woman's place is in the home as caretaker and nurturer. Nell was content serving as Coordinator of Instruction and Advisement while her son was young because she wanted to be at home when he returned from school. Midge was content being a college teacher because the position afforded her plenty of time to spend with her family. A career woman most of her life, Austin was willing to take a career time-out to move East to be near her new husband and his daughter. Being with her family seemed to be the right choice at that point in her career. Thus, these women chose to take on the role of mother and/or wife.

Because traditional gender stereotyping and a dominant culture that places women in the private domain are so powerful, women have to make many choices when crafting a career. Oftentimes, these choices are in response to specific episodes that happen in their lives. Midge started to craft a career once her sons were old enough to be self-sufficient. As she became more career driven, her marriage dissolved. As painful as this event was in her life, it was a catalyst to career growth. After her divorce, Midge's career flourished. Austin applied for a position at Twain Community College because she wanted to be near her husband. Had she not made that personal choice, she might not have considered the academic deanship at Twain as her next professional choice. Nell served as Coordinator of Instruction until her son was a teenager. Once he became more independent, Nell was able to look for the next career step. And Beth's divorce and her career drive go hand-in-hand. She got divorced because she wanted a career. Once she was divorced, her career blossomed. Thus, these women made professional compromises to fit their personal lives and personal compromises to fit their professional lives. Their career lives were ephemeral; they shifted and changed as their life circumstances changed.

Summary

The data has shown that career development is a much more complex phenomenon than just choosing a career path and moving merrily along one's way. This chapter has explored the many themes and patterns that emerged from the case

studies. The analysis has revealed that there are many factors and variables that influence and shape women's professional careers in higher education.

The final chapter, the discussion chapter, will explore how the emergent themes from this study compare with the literature on career development. The four research questions, which guided this study, will be discussed. In addition, questions for further study will be posed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Statement of the Problem

The literature on women in higher education has increased dramatically over the last decade. However, few studies exist which deal specifically with the career development of women to senior academic officer positions. Yet as more and more women pursue senior level administrative careers, there arises a need to better understand how an aspiring female professional develops a career as an administrator. What is this phenomenon of career development? How do women develop careers in hierarchical organizations? How do traditional gender-roles influence career choice?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research project was to promote a fuller understanding of the career development processes among women who strive for and achieve senior academic administrative positions in two-year, public community and technical colleges. Women at the community colleges were chosen for a number of reasons. There is a paucity of literature written about women leaders in community colleges, most of the literature focuses on women in four-year colleges and universities. To date, there has not been a study which specifically targets the career development of women to senior academic officer positions in community colleges. The diverse

populations at community colleges, including a high enrollment of women students and a high number of female employees, makes studying careers in these institutions enlightening. Yet in spite of the large numbers of female students and female employees at the community colleges, only 12% of the presidents and 22% of the senior academic officers are women (Vaughn, 1994). A 1991 study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education found that in the public community colleges, 66% of the nonprofessional staff and 60% of the professional support staff were women while only 38% of the senior administrative staff were women. At the four-year public colleges, the numbers were much the same; 64% of the nonprofessional staff and 61% of the professional support staff were women compared to only 37% of the senior administrative staff. Why are there so few female senior administrators given the high percentage of women in middle-management positions?

This study, on the career development of selected community college academic leaders, adds to the growing scholarship on women. If colleges are seriously committed to moving more women into senior academic administrative positions, then understanding how these achievers have developed their careers will provide insights for assisting other women to achieve their career goals.

Research Questions

To gain an understanding of the career development of these women, research questions focused on four specific areas. Through a review of the literature on career development, career paths and patterns, and careers in the community colleges, I was

able to generate the research questions: What are the characteristic of these achievers? How did traditional gender-based social roles influence career aspirations and career choice? How have these women approached career decision-making? Who or what influenced these women in their decision-making processes?

Because quantitative research methods cannot be used to accurately describe experience, Naturalistic Inquiry, a qualitative methodology rooted in ethnography and phenomenology, was the method of choice. The techniques of Naturalistic Inquiry, in-depth interviewing, document analysis, and observation lead to a better understanding of the dynamic and idiosyncratic behavior of humans in social settings. Six women were chosen to participate in this study. Data collection for this study was accomplished through document analysis of each respondent's curriculum vitae and through in-depth interviews. Interview questions, developed in advance, were open-ended, allowing the respondents to answer from their own frame of reference rather than from structured, prearranged questions.

Research Findings

A number of themes and patterns emerged from the data. The findings and a comparison with the literature, are presented in relation to the research questions.

What Are the Characteristics of These Achievers?

The literature review indicates that many external and internal factors contribute to the career development of the individual; among these are education, family

upbringing, personality characteristics and traits, and one's perception of sex-roles. Clearly, a complex interplay of interpersonal, family, sociocultural, and intrapersonal factors give shape to individual occupational choice. The review also suggests that achievers have strong personalities, are assertive, and are self-confident. They possess a strong desire for achievement, autonomy, dominance, and status. The themes which emerged from the data, serving as indicators of how personality influences career choice, are congruous with the literature on individual career development.

Clearly, all six of these women are hard workers who are willing to go the extra mile if it benefits their students and their institutions. Many espouse the Protestant work ethic: if you work hard and are productive, you will be rewarded appropriately, the reward being promotion to the senior ranks. Essentially, four of the six respondents built their careers within one institution. Working hard for the greater good of the institution is especially important when crafting a career from within. Proving to the senior administration one's dedication and a willingness to work to achieve the common goals of the institution is paramount to building an administrative career within one institution.

Hard work is also a means to an end. As the respondents recognized a desire to attain senior administrative positions, they worked diligently to achieve that goal. They consciously knew that by gaining a breadth of experience and depth of knowledge they would be prepared to climb the next step on the academic administrative ladder. Mitchell and Krumboltz (1985) theorized that for maximum career development to occur, individuals must have sufficient opportunities to be exposed to a wide range of

experience. For the respondents, each new experience fostered a heightened desire to move to the next step, to become an academic leader. Through hard work and determination, these women took control of both their career and their professional destiny.

Much of this inclination to hard work is grounded in their desire to serve. Commitment to the institution and commitment to the students were common themes among the respondents. These women have a strong sense of self-worth and believe they have a meaningful purpose in life. They consciously chose careers in the community colleges because they are committed to occupational education and to insuring access to opportunities for their students. They are professionally fulfilled at institutions which offer educational opportunities to persons oftentimes marginalized by society: persons who are either economically or academically disadvantaged. This finding is consistent with Holland's (1985) findings on personality and vocational choice. Choosing a career in an institution which serves others is an expression of each woman's personality. Gilligan (1982) and others found that women's sense of self is perceived in the context of connection with and responsiveness to others. These respondents believed that being an academic dean includes a connection to the lives of students. Their work as academic leaders in the community colleges is important because they believe it makes a difference in people's lives. They have dedicated their professional careers to helping people make personal changes and take control of their own destinies.

Juxtaposed against this desire to serve is a highly competitive nature. Although most of the respondents did not admit to being competitive and oftentimes denied that they were aggressive, the data clearly shows that each possesses a competitive streak. This is consistent with the literature on women in nontraditional occupations. Lemkau (1979), Bachtold (1976), Chusmir (1983), and others described nontraditional women as assertive and possessing high needs for achievement, autonomy, dominance, and status. The study respondents are achievers who like to be in control, who like to be competitive. Many competed as athletes as young adults, and most continue to participate in some type of athletic endeavor as middle-aged women. They don't shy away from competition and are not afraid of conflict. This affinity for competition has aided their career development; they are not afraid of success, nor are they afraid to compete in an organization that is hierarchical.

Paradoxically, being aggressive and competitive does not mean stepping on the backs of others to get ahead. However, these women aggressively stand up for what they believe is right and just. Midge says it best:

> If women have something that they believe in, they are willing to go a step beyond to force the issues because they believe in whatever the issue is. In order to be successful and to get ahead in a hierarchy, women have to be able to be aggressive and assertive. It is critical that women have a voice and use it. And men often interpret this as being aggressive, but it is just standing up for what you think is right.

Their commitment to equal opportunity and quality education makes them aggressive champions for those marginalized by society.

Additionally, their competitive nature does not hinder their ability to be cooperative and collaborative. Being competitive does not necessarily mean being selfish. These women possess a strong connection to others. In fact, their experiences with team sports has augmented their ability to be team players. They are less individual-oriented and more team-oriented. This has played an important role in career growth and development, particularly for the women who crafted their careers in one institution. Their success is directly related to their ability to work well with people. They are able to work for the common good of, and advance the fortunes of, the "team," and it is clear that the team has become the institution.

Although these women have achieved career success and are competitive, many do not consider themselves to be high achievers or career driven. Eden (1993), Ellerman and Johnston (1988), Lemkau (1979), and Murrell (1991) all found that successful women set high career goals for themselves. Four of the six women desire a college presidency while the other two are content serving as senior academic officers. The two who indicated that they were satisfied reaching the academic deanship would argue that just because they are not interested in a presidency does not necessarily mean they are not career driven. Likewise, of the four who desire a presidency, one does not consider herself driven to the position. She feels compelled to serve as a college president because she believes she has something to offer. Each of these women is an achiever, each has set high career goals. Some simply have set loftier goals than others.

The literature review surmises that in order to successfully compete and achieve in a nontraditional profession, a woman must be self-confident and show a high level of self-esteem (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Nevill & Schlecker, 1988). Most of these respondents did not begin their careers intending to be academic deans, they chose this career path after years of experience in higher education. The data underscores how important possessing high levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy are to career development and occupational choice. With the exception of Allison, the other respondents started their careers with very little self-confidence. All six started in very traditional women's careers. However, with time and experience, their self-confidence grew. As their careers as faculty or as middle-managers flourished, their self-confidence blossomed. And as their self-confidence grew, so did their career drive and their desire to pursue an occupation considered nontraditional to women. Even though there are many women in higher education administration, women are concentrated in middle-management positions rather than at the senior level. Therefore, senior academic administration is considered nontraditional for women. For the respondents, growth in self-assurance and career success went hand-in-hand; as each woman became more self-assured, she was able to take on the next challenge and move up the administrative career ladder with poise and confidence.

The data clearly demonstrates that who these women are personally, is who they are professionally. Their connection to people drew them to careers in higher education. Gaining a breadth of knowledge and a depth of experience via their propensity to work hard garnered them the skills necessary for making appropriate

career choices. Their competitive natures equipped them with the confidence necessary for survival in a hierarchical organization. And their dedication and commitment to helping others lured them to careers in community colleges. These leaders are an uncommon blend of the nurturing, supportive characteristics deemed natural to women, and the no-nonsense, aggressive, competitive characteristics deemed natural to men.

How Did Traditional Gender-Based Social Roles Influence Their Careers?

What is missing from the above analysis is the extent to which gender was a factor in these women's career choices. The literature reveals that high-achieving women tend not to place value on the appropriate roles for women, as ascribed by society. The data repudiates this. Gender was a factor for many of these achievers. How they perceived themselves as women and how they viewed their place in the private and public domain, significantly shaped their careers.

The data reveals, for four respondents, how pervasive and powerful the dominant culture can be in influencing women's careers. Ironically, institutional barriers based on gender stereotyping and discrimination were not the issue for them. The barriers were more internalized, based on the messages of the dominant culture that places women in the private domain before the public domain. These women were stuck in the dominant culture of the 1960s and 1970s. The influence of traditional family values socialized them into choosing traditional female careers. Like the female college students studied by Eisenhart (1985), these women made their career choices based on a limited range of experiences and associations. Their career choices were

based on images of women in popular culture and traditional gender roles. Society's messages about the appropriate role for women was so strong that it almost prevented some talented women from achieving a senior position.

An interesting paradox exists. Crawford (1978), Mazen and Lemkau (1990), and others found that women who choose nontraditional careers are not influenced by traditional gender-based social roles. But these four women were influenced by traditional gender stereotyping — their first career choices were very traditional. However, the choice to pursue a nontraditional career, academic affairs, came later in life. It took time and experience for these women to break free from sex-role stereotyping. These findings support Harmon's Opportunities Dominance Theory (1989). As more possibilities were presented to these women, they adapted their career aspirations to take advantage of those opportunities. The results also repudiated Harmon's Socialization Dominance Hypothesis, in which Harmon theorizes that only a fundamental change in the early socialization of women will change their career interests. Their later social structure changed, and thus, so did their career orientation, proving that change can occur later in life.

For these four women, making choices was predicated not on personal whims, but on personal life in relation to husband and children. As with the women in Swanson and Tokar's (1991) and Farmer's (1976) studies, societal pressures to fulfill multiple responsibilities of motherhood, career, and family created serious career obstacles. However, these women viewed choosing motherhood over career as a choice and it was a choice that fit. Nell was content serving as Coordinator of

Instruction and Advisement while her son was young because she wanted to be at home when he returned from school. Midge was content being a college professor because the position afforded her plenty of quality time to spend with her family. Beth was willing to quit her first job to be a traditional, stay-at-home wife. A career woman most of her life, Austin was willing to take a career time-out and move East to be near her new husband and his daughter. Being with her family seemed to be the right choice at that point in her career. Thus, because the dominant culture placing women in the private domain is so powerful and pervasive in society, these women had to make many choices when crafting a career.

However, these women were as much alike in their achievements, as they were in their lifestyles. Two of the respondents, Allison and Josephine, never married or placed family above career. They have been career-oriented from the start. Even Josephine, whose first degree was in a traditional women's field, has been career driven. Traditional gender roles were never an issue; her life has been her work, and her work is her life.

How Have These Women Approached Career Decision-Making?

In a hierarchical organization (which defines the administrative organization in higher education) careers have direction. The most common metaphor used to describe careers in higher education is that of a ladder with positions clearly defined in a tightly ordered sequence with increasing responsibility. These case studies uncovered many paths to the top of the senior academic administrative ladder. A few of the respondents

careers were very linear; starting as faculty, they stepping on every rung of the academic career ladder described by Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, and Bragg (1993). Others developed their careers strictly from within the academic administrative ranks. And others stepped back and forth between academic affairs and student affairs. However, whatever the path taken, the study confirms Twombley's (1986) findings that the most common previous position for community college academic officers is as department head or assistant dean.

In terms of career development in higher education, there have been a number of sacred cows; continuous employment, advanced education, willingness to move, and faculty experience have all been cited as fundamental to attaining a senior academic administrative position. It was certainly different for many of these women which may indicate that career development is different in the community colleges. As discussed above, some of the women took career time-outs to raise a family or to retain a marriage. Some served as faculty while others crafted their careers from within the administrative ranks. And some were willing to move, while others were not. Four of the respondents crafted their entire career within one institution. One came to academic affairs after a long career in student affairs at a university; however, she spent many years proving herself as an academic administrator within one community college. These four women capitalized on the potential for career growth within one institution. The other two came to their senior positions via direct application; they applied to a vacant position and were hired from outside of the college. They were willing to relocate to build a career. Whether they came from outside, or built their

career from within, the data revealed three common factors that triggered the climb up the ladder: positioning herself for the next step, deciding whether or not the next step fit, and assessing her educational attainment.

Positioning Oneself

When women are asked, "How did you get to where you are?" they often reply, "I was in the right place at the right time." Clearly the data shows this is somewhat true. What is more significant, is not that they were in the right place at the right time, but that they were the right person in the right place at the right time. Certainly, each one of these respondents positioned herself well to move up the academic administrative ladder. Some were careful planners expertly crafting their careers, others positioned themselves for the next position by gaining a breadth of experience and a depth of knowledge. But, they successfully competed for positions because they were right person for the job. Thus, these leaders' careers were not as serendipitous as they sometimes would like to believe. They worked hard in addition to positioning themselves well.

Finding the Right Fit

Ginzberg postulated in 1972 that people make career decisions by striving to optimize their satisfactions, and they do this by finding the best possible fit between their priorities and desires, and their opportunities. Jenkins (1989) has also argued that a good match between worker and job structure was important for career development.

She stated, "People are more likely to select jobs that they perceive to be congruent with their job values and that offer the forms of satisfaction that they prefer" (p. 230). For respondents in this study, positioning oneself for the next position was important but, finding the right fit was also key. Whether starting their career in the community college, or coming to the community college from the university, all six of these women articulated that they were committed to the type of education offered in the community colleges. The college's mission matched each woman's values about the purpose of higher education. It was the right fit. The types of programs offered at Sand Hill and a nurturing institutional culture were conducive to Midge's career growth within one institution. The mission at Silver Bay Community College, which includes access to educational opportunities and training the workforce, fit Josephine. Mountain Lakes fits Nell because the college "truly embraces its access mission." An idealist, Beth is dedicated to the types of programs and opportunities offered at the community colleges. Red Brick Community College fits; the mission matches Beth's philosophy of the purpose of higher education.

Even though Austin and Allison are committed to the type of education offered at the community colleges, finding the right fit meant something more for these two women. Austin calls herself a "proletarian," who is also a "frustrated cultural anthropologist." She thrives in a multicultural environment; she is also happiest at a college where the faculty are represented by a collective bargaining unit. For Allison, finding the right fit meant finding an institution in which the management style of the senior team matched her style of collaboration and cooperation.

Thus, "positioning" oneself well is important to shaping an academic career in higher education. But, for these women, "position" began by being in colleges which matched who they were as individuals as well as their beliefs about the purpose of higher education. To be in the right place at the right time, they had to be the right person at the right time. And being the right person in the right place meant finding the right fit.

Education and Life-Long Learning

The literature review shows that, in terms of career development, the level of education attained may be the most important career decision; the higher the level of education, the more diverse the occupational opportunities (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1985; Harmon, 1989). Without a doubt, obtaining the doctorate degree was one of the keys to success for the study respondents. Only one of the respondents did not possess the doctorate, however, she did have an M.F.A. in Writing and was well respected within her institution as a writer and a speaker. Many of the respondents referred to the doctorate as the "union card" necessary to achieve a senior academic administrative position. They knew they needed it to continue up the ladder, so once they made the decision to pursue a senior level position, they worked hard to obtain the degree. But the doctorate was more than just a union card. Through their graduate studies, each woman grew professionally and intellectually. In graduate school these women gained self-confidence in their abilities as academic leaders. Their critical thinking and

speaking skills flourished. They proved themselves as academicians, not only to their colleagues but to themselves as well.

It is interesting to note that five of these women (with the exception of Allison, the youngest respondent) pursued graduate degrees only after many years as a professional. None of the five came from families in which education was encouraged for women; education for women was valued, but in a limited sense. They were from working-class families or first generation college graduates, where they were encouraged to pursue an education to get a job, not to craft a career. As noted above, their initial career choices were predicated on the traditional role for women. In this area, the study seems to refute the literature on the careers of achievers. Jagacinski (1987), Lemkau (1983), and Williams and McCullers (1983) have all postulated that women achievers come from families in which they are stimulated to explore a wide range of educational opportunities (including nontraditional occupations) and are encouraged to aspire to lofty career heights. Yet none of these women were encouraged by their families to pursue graduate degrees; each woman made the choice on her own. After years of experience in higher education, each woman knew she needed the degree to be successful, so she actively pursued it. They were in colloquial parlance late bloomers, and successful late bloomers at that.

Professional development and life-long learning were also keys to their achievements. These women took deliberate steps to assure their success. Even though most have completed their professional studies, these women continue to pursue professional development opportunities. Participating in professional development

activities enhanced their careers and furthered their career development. However, these women pursued professional development for very different reasons. Some used professional development activities as tools to help them climb the ladder, making them more viable as academic leaders. Others used professional development to enhance their effectiveness as academic deans at their institutions rather than for career development purposes. Either way, professional development activities were important to the career growth of each.

Who or What Influenced These Women in Their Decision-Making Processes?

The study illustrates how critical the presence of mentors is to career development. There is a rich body of literature which suggests that a senior colleague, the mentor, is important if not critical to helping a junior colleague, the protégé, establish a professional identity while learning the ropes of organizational life (Dalton, Thompson, Price, 1977; Kram, 1986; Levinson, 1978; McNeer, 1983; Phillips-Jones, 1982; Reich, 1985). Mentors affirm potential, enhance self-confidence and self-esteem, and encourage their protégés' professional development. This study clearly shows that these women also benefitted from mentoring relationships. Five of the six women identified at least one person who was critical to their career development, the sixth talked about relationships with friends and colleagues who were crucial to her career decision-making.

However, this study contradicts the feminist literature which implies that women need a female mentor. Hall and Sandler (1983), McNeer (1983), and others

have suggested that women need female mentors because women require relationships which foster mutual trust and increasing intimacy. This study's participants had relationships with both men and women, and for the most part the male mentors were more significant. The key was that these relationships were not hierarchical, they were more connected. They significantly differed from the father-son relationships described by Levinson (1978) and Reich (1985). They were more closely aligned with Phillips-Jones' (1982) secondary mentors (mentors who served as confidants and idea generators, who supported their protégés' career goals and decisions) and Kram's (1986) mentors who promoted the psychosocial development of their protégés. The mentors in this study (both male and female) affirmed their protégés' potential, encouraged their protégés to take risks, participated in conversations in which there was an open exchange of ideas, listened to their protégés, and helped them define career goals. Some of the mentors picked their protégé out of the crowd because they recognized talent. Other times, the study respondents sought out their mentors; they desired to learn and knew they needed advice and guidance to be successful.

Some of the study respondents described their mentors as cheerleaders, an interesting metaphor considering most of the mentors were male and society's image of a cheerleader is always a female. But in fact these male mentors were, in essence, cheerleaders. They were men who championed their protégés' career development. They were men who possessed the capacity to participate in a caring, intimate relationship that fostered the psychosocial development of their protégés. They believed in their protégés and developed long lasting relationships with them. Austin

told the story about thanking Bill when she was hired as the Academic Dean at Twain Community College. Midge still keeps in close contact with her mentor and considers him one of her closest friends and allies. Beth treasures her friendship with Donald. All of the respondents cherish the connected and intimate relationships they shared, and in most cases, continue to share with their mentors. Nell said it best when talking about the need for connection, the need for reaching out to others for career assistance, "Lily Tomlin said, 'We are all in this alone.' But we are all in it alone and together too."

Studies have also shown that the point of entry into an administrative career can be the most important factor in determining how high up the administrative ladder one can climb (Warner & DeFleur, 1993). For many of the study respondents, having a mentor as they embarked upon an administrative career was crucial to their subsequent career development. These mentors employed more traditional mentoring stratagems by opening up doors of opportunity and aiding in the climb up the hierarchy. They understood and recognized the importance of point of entry for an administrative career, and as a result, carefully assisted their protégés in defining a career path. Oftentimes, they were the same mentors mentioned above who encouraged the psychosocial development of their protégés. Thus, they served dual roles: they opened up doors of opportunity while encouraging the personal growth of their protégés. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, they positively impacted and enhanced their protégés' career.

Implications and Further Research Questions

I embarked upon this study for two personal and professional reasons. As a professional faculty member at a two-year public institution, I strongly believed that the open door mission of community colleges and the culture at these institutions allows women and other minorities to aspire to senior positions more readily than at four-year colleges and universities. However, in spite of the large number of women at the community colleges as students and employees, women still only comprise about 12% of the presidencies and 22% of the senior academic officers (Vaughn, 1994). The numbers in New England community colleges are somewhat better than the national average: 24% of the presidents and 28% of the senior academic officers are women. Clearly, and in spite of my beliefs, women who have climbed the academic administrative ladder are still in the minority. I was also drawn to this study because my own career goal is to achieve a senior academic officer position. Therefore, I was motivated by my career aspirations to learn how those women in the community colleges who have secured positions managed to move up the administrative ladder.

Who are these women? What is so special about these exemplary women who have achieved success in a traditional male domain? How did they achieve a career in institutions still very much hierarchical in nature? What insights can be gained from their experiences? Thus, I pursued this project to get a better understanding of these achievers and their careers and to get answers to my own questions. My intent was that the themes grounded in the data would serve to shed some light on the avenues of

mobility and the patterns of achievement while getting to a fuller understanding of this phenomenon of career development.

In retrospect, some of the findings surprised me, and some were expected because they concurred with the literature review. I began this research expecting these women to discuss how structural barriers impeded their climb up the ladder. I was surprised to learn, that for many of these women, internalized barriers relating to gender and the role of women were more significant. I expected the respondents to be somewhat alike and was pleasantly surprised to find out how much alike yet also how different they were in their career paths and their lifestyles. I was also surprised to learn how important institutional culture is to career growth and development.

All of these interpretations and findings affirm the choice of a qualitative methodology for this research project. Had I not engaged in in-depth conversations with these women, I would never have gotten to an understanding of the complexities of human nature. I would have missed many of the subtleties. Using Naturalistic Inquiry, a methodology with its roots in ethnography and phenomenology, provided me with the tools necessary to indeed discover that all aspects of reality are interrelated. Understanding and recognizing these multiple realities led to a better understanding of the dynamic nature of human action in social settings. The following assertions which emerged from the data provide a framework for career development within which individuals can explore their own career options. However, because no phenomenon can be understood outside of the time and context in which it developed, the burden of applying the findings of this study to another context lies with the transferrer.

This study showcases how important personality characteristics are to someone's career development. Who these women are as individuals is also who they are as professionals; their personalities inform how they live their professional lives. They aligned themselves with both feminine and masculine behavioral characteristics. They found the best of both worlds; they are a blend of the aggressive, competitive characteristics deemed natural to men, and the caring, nurturing characteristics deemed natural to women. They are competitive, yet collaborative, aggressive, yet caring. Their connection to people is important. Had I spent more time with these women, I may have been able to discover whether they always possessed both feminine and masculine traits or if they grew into these patterns over time. Did the hierarchical nature of their colleges force them to develop the masculine side of their personalities? Was it necessary for survival and for achievement? I am not certain that these women are unique in possessing this blend of masculine and feminine traits. I would guess that most people do possess a blend but because of sex-role stereotyping, they are denied the opportunity to demonstrate these characteristics. A further study could get to an understanding of how sex-role stereotyping can limit development of masculine and feminine personality traits.

A strong sense of self-confidence is key. These women believed in themselves, they believed they had something to offer. Even though this strong sense of self grew as their careers flourished, self-confidence and the ability to project a strong sense of self was key to achieving a senior position. Their career success, at all stages,

depended on their poise and ability to articulate confidence in their own leadership abilities.

Commitment to the Community Colleges

Grounded in their ethical beliefs and their desire to remain connected to people was a desire to serve. Over and over again, these women used the words "commitment" and "dedication." They chose careers in the community colleges because they were committed to the open door access mission. They chose careers as academic deans because they wished to better serve their students. The impetus for leaving faculty positions for administration was grounded in this desire to serve; these women wanted to broaden their scope of impact, they wanted a bigger canvas on which to paint. Others, who started their careers in administration, did so because they believed being an administrator at a community college assured that they could reach out to underrepresented and disadvantaged persons. When these women made the decision to move into leadership positions, they did so not because they were hungry for power, but because they wanted to serve their students in a much bigger way. Their dedication and commitment served as a catalyst to their career achievements.

Gender and Career Success

Even though a good deal of "old-fashioned sexism" creates structural barriers for women, internalized barriers related to one's own ambivalence about the appropriate roles for women, fear of success, and a fear of the consequences of success

creates more significant barriers. The stories they told revealed that, for many of these achievers, internalized barriers grounded in sex-role stereotyping fashioned more significant barriers to achievement than structural barriers revolving around gender discrimination. Austin was very clear-eyed in recognizing her own internalized barriers to success. Her mother's messages about the appropriate role for women compelled her to question whether or not a woman should be a college president. Others, rightfully so, feared the consequences of success. These women either lost marriages or relationships once they embarked upon professional careers. The price of success was high, and for many, it was a painful experience. Interestingly enough, strong male mentors were pivotal in helping many of the study respondents overcome internalized barriers. These men encouraged their protégés' development with nongendered, positive messages. The affirmation and encouragement that they received pushed these women to stretch their horizons, to strive for success, and to reach beyond traditional social roles. Therefore, removing structural barriers to women's achievement is important, but eliminating internalized barriers to success is paramount.

Gender and Career Choice

The influence of popular culture and traditional family values socialize women at an early age into choosing traditional female occupations. Five of the respondents initially chose traditional female professions: one chose nursing, two chose teaching, and one chose secretarial science. The fifth chose English as a major because it

seemed a safe option for a woman. These choices were predicated on logical perceptions about what was appropriate for women, i.e., what their culture has deemed appropriate. Even Josephine, who never articulated that gender was an issue, chose to pursue a degree in secretarial science, an appropriate role for women in the early 1960s. Family attitudes about traditional sex-roles also strongly influenced their career choices. These same five women either came from working-class families or were first-generation college graduates. The male-centeredness of working-class culture shaped their early career choices. Essentially, they were pursuing education not to develop a career, but to get a job.

There is hope, however, for the next generation of women. Allison, the youngest respondent, was highly encouraged by her parents who were educated professionals, to pursue whatever career she desired. Born in the 1950s and growing into adulthood in the late 1970s, Allison entered adulthood at a time when the dominant paradigm was shifting. It was becoming easier for women to choose nontraditional careers and to be career-oriented. When it came time for Allison to pursue an academic deanship, there was no hesitation. She did not question whether or not it was appropriate for a woman to be an academic dean, she did not fear success in a nontraditional occupation.

Gender and Career Development Models

Men are rarely, if ever, required to make the choice between career and home. However, the opposite is true for women. Although society (and societal norms in

relation to gender) have changed considerably in the last decade, women's perceived "first role" as wives and mothers frequently limits women's career development. Martin (1985) used the terms "productive" and "reproductive" to describe the processes that society values and teaches. Understanding the productive and reproductive processes leads to an understanding of why women's career models often are two tracked, forcing women to choose between the private and public domain.

> The reproductive processes of society, broadly interpreted to include the rearing of children to more or less independence, are excluded by fiat from the political domain, which is defined in relation to the world of productive processes - political, social, cultural, as well as economic. (Martin, 1985, p. 178)

The productive processes are those which prepare individuals for citizen and workplace. These processes are generally viewed as more male than female, and are part of the public domain. The reproductive processes are "a category [defined] broadly to include not simply conception and birth but the rearing of children to more or less maturity and associated with activities such as tending the sick, taking care of the family needs, and running the household" (Martin, 1985, p. 6). The reproductive processes are generally regarded as naturally female. Clearly, the productive and reproductive processes are culturally based, defining the roles of men and women in society. Thus, for many women, strong involvement in career and family roles is very difficult to achieve and particularly so given a culture in which the perceived primacy of women's biological roles can serve as salient and pernicious barriers to their career development. By accepting that the reproductive processes is natural to women,

society relegates women to the private domain. This forces women to make more life choices and can interfere with their career development.

Oftentimes scholars and career development researchers preserve the dominant paradigm. Their career development models (including models on women's career development) place the reproductive process in the private domain. Betz and Fitzgerald's (1987) model and Fassinger's (1985) model portray how family orientation influences career orientation. Women have two choices: they either choose a career, or they raise a family first, and then pursue a career later. By developing two-pathed models for women, family path vs. career path, and by not using the same model for men, the dominant paradigm perpetuates, banishing women to the professional basement.

If society is immersed in the dominant paradigm, the question of whether or not society can be changed to accommodate structures and systems that support multiple roles for men and women may never be asked. As a society, we need to shift the paradigm and recognize the reproductive process in career development models. We also need to include men more deeply in the reproductive process. Why should women have to be the only parent to consider career vs. family obligations? Why should women get to make so many choices [sic]? Not every man or woman will choose family over career, nor will every man or woman choose career over family. Recognizing multiple roles for men and women would also mean moving the reproductive process from the private domain to the public domain. It is time to reframe the questions regarding career and family as choices for both men and women.

This study clearly shows that women are required to make the choice between career and family. Some of the study respondents chose family first and career second, some chose career first. However, neither path made one more successful than the other. All six of these women achieved career success, all six are senior academic officers. As we move the reproductive process from the private domain to the public domain, we will acknowledge that careers are, and can be, ephemeral; they shift and change as life circumstances change. Schlossberg, Lynch, and Chickering (1989) showed that adult development is episodic and frequently is precipitated by crisis. These crises and episodes must be taken into account when developing career models. Marriage, child-birth, divorce, unemployment, and death of a parent all are factors that influence career development. These are not just women's issues; they are human issues.

Career Models and Career Success

As we refine career development models, we also need to rethink how we measure career success. Does society place too high a value on attaining a career goal before the age of 40? When considering that most people begin their careers in their early 20s and finish in their 60s, how many years do we have to be employed before we consider our careers successful? The data shows that it is impossible to place a timeframe on the career success of these six women. They all achieved their careers via different paths and in different timeframes. Three became senior academic officers in their mid-40s, two in their late 40's, and one in her late 30's. They chose to pursue

the senior position at varying times in their lives, and oftentimes these choices were based on life events. In addition, they all viewed career success differently. Two of the respondents, Josephine and Allison, have achieved their career goal of attaining a senior academic officer position. The others, Beth, Midge, Austin, and Nell, are seeking college presidencies. For them, there is another phase in their careers, another rung on the ladder. Nell is not seeking a presidency because she is particularly driven to do so, she is drawn to the presidency because she believes she has something to offer. In their stories, Midge, Austin, and Beth all envision a presidency as their final career goal. As a post-script, since this study began, Beth and Nell have indeed been named presidents of their institutions. And Midge has attained a presidency at a two-year, private college in another state in the East.

Education: The Key to Success

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, education was the key to these leader's success. Conventional wisdom indicates that to successfully climb the academic ladder, women need to talk like an academician, need to think like an academician, and need to write like an academician. Through their graduate studies these women honed their intellectual skills and proved themselves as critical thinkers and writers. And although graduate work may not be the only way to develop intellectually, possessing a doctorate is still viewed by many in higher education as the union card, the credential necessary to work at the senior level. Possessing the doctorate is one sure step toward ensuring success in academic administration.

Finding the Right Fit and Positioning Oneself

Obviously, career development is part luck, part timing, and part fit — rarely does anyone ever develop a successful career purely on talent and merit. Career success is indeed serendipitous; one has to be in the right place at the right time. However, that person must also be the right person at the right time. He or she must fit the institution, and the institution must fit them.

Institutional Culture and Career

Finding the right fit relates to how institutional culture influences career growth and development. An entire body of literature exists dealing with structural barriers and their influence on women's careers. However, structural barriers to career achievement did not exist for these women. It is important to understand the context in which these women developed their careers. The community colleges, unlike the four-year colleges and universities, have always had missions which ensure access to those who have not been served well by traditional higher education. This access to opportunities guarantees that community colleges are more accessible to many of society's marginalized peoples, including women. In many ways, the community colleges, with their diverse student bodies and diverse administrative teams, are more reflective of today's society. Thus, community colleges seem to possess an environment and culture with a more egalitarian ethic. This egalitarian ethic should influence institutional policies regarding hiring and promotion. Most community colleges openly encourage women to pursue senior administrative careers. Therefore,

women should be afforded more opportunities for advancement, giving community colleges a higher percentage of female leaders than four-year colleges and universities.

However, the percentages of women at the senior level in community colleges are still quite low. Surprisingly, in comparison with the four-year colleges, there is no notable difference. Of the 556 presidents at accredited, four-year public colleges and universities, 78 (14%) of the presidents are women. At the 905 accredited, two-year public colleges, 138 (15%) of the presidents are women. At the private colleges, women hold 27% of the presidencies in two-year schools, and 15% of the presidencies in four-year schools (Office of Women in Higher Education [OWHE], 1995). The numbers seem to indicate that in a general sense, community colleges are more welcoming and more accessible to career growth and career advancement than the four year colleges and universities.

What I find to be most critical, is the particular institution with an environment that encourages women to aspire and achieve. The career lives of the study respondents reveal how important culture is to career growth and advancement. Midge was able to develop an administrative career at Sand Hill Community College because the president had cultivated an environment which valued women. Nell worked in an environment that she described as "matriarchal." Austin and Allison worked for women presidents whose style, and subsequently the style of their management teams, was one of collaboration and cooperation. Women were encouraged to participate and to climb the academic administrative ladder. The institutional culture fostered their ability to be effective and to perform skillfully as administrators.

A negative culture can also have a positive influence on career development. When President Michaelson left Bayside Community College, a strong backlash against women occurred and the institutional culture quickly degenerated. Allison was not at a point in her career where she was ready make a career move, but it quickly became apparent that it was time for her to move on. She pursued academic administrative positions elsewhere and was hired as the academic dean at Green Valley Community College. Thus, the negative institutional culture encouraged her to pursue a more positive environment in which to develop her career.

This assertion, more than any of the others, affirms the research methodology. Had I used a quantitative method, I would never have ascertained how important institutional culture, type of institution, and specific setting is to career growth. Had I not conducted the research in a setting where all of the contextual variables were interacting, I would never have recognized how important context is to human behavior. At the same time, one of the weaknesses of this study is that the research focus did not include a question or questions which more fully explored the influence of institutional culture on career development. Since the results of this study indicate that it is important for women to plant their seeds where they can bloom, it would seem that a further study is necessary that would focus on institutional culture and career development.

Career Development and Mentors

"In a world predominantly composed of, run by, and culturally designed for men, mentoring for women becomes a requirement rather than a nicety" (Bower, 1993, p. 91). This study clearly indicates that mentoring is crucial to career development. The mentors in this study affirmed the potential of these women while opening up doors of opportunities. Sometimes the mentors chose their protégés and other times the women actively sought out mentors. If colleges are committed to the advancement of women, they must include mentoring programs in their staff development. Whether offering structured programs in which mentors seek out protégés, or making mentors available for women interested in connecting with someone to act as a career guide, women need good mentors. Mentors are critical in the development of the professional self and the individual self. Women are more likely able to move to senior academic administrative positions if they are sponsored by a mentor.

However, the results of this study tends to contradict the feminist literature on cross-gender mentoring. Both men and women can be effective as mentors. Postulating that only women can be effective mentors for women is short-sighted. There are numerous males who are committed to developing women as leaders and who are able to participate in caring, intimate relationships that are not sexual in nature. These men are a unique combination of masculine characteristics and traits, and the feminine characteristics of caring and nurturance deemed natural to women. And because men overwhelmingly occupy the senior level positions, we cannot underestimate the valuable role they can play as mentors for achieving women.

Summary

This study informs our knowledge on women's career development in the community colleges. However, I cannot say that every woman who pursues a career as a senior academic officer will act as these women. That is one of the limitations of a Naturalistic Inquiry study; research findings are not used to predict or control, they are used to inform our knowledge on the complexities of human behavior. Not every woman will act in the same manner as these achievers — they have not shared all of the same experiences. For instance, I cannot say that every woman who pursues a career as a senior administrator in a community college will find that internalized barriers around the appropriate roles for women will pose a more significant barrier than the nature of the hierarchy. I cannot say that every woman who pursues a senior position will work hard to position herself for success. Nor can I say that every achiever is in the right place at the right time. Human behavior is never black and white, there is a lot of grey in how we respond to our experiences. In essence, I am not interested in smoothing off the rough edges of each of these achiever's stories to get to a norm and generalize. Very few women, or men for that matter, fit the norm or go about developing their lives via the norm. My job as the researcher was not to look for certainty or answers to create a framework for all women's career development. My job was to get at some meaning in the careers choices and career development of these women.

What I have learned does have value and is an important contribution to the scholarship on women. Gender-stereotyping, achievement related conflicts, the nature

of the administrative hierarchy, the nature of community colleges, and other factors all worked together mutually to give shape to these achiever's careers. These themes and interpretations can be transferred to similar contexts. Other woman can learn from these respondent's lives and transfer similarities and differences to their own lives and careers.

Clearly, the six women who participated in this study are achievers. They are dedicated to the community colleges and work diligently to ensure that these institutions remain the colleges of the people. They are bright, courageous women who overcame enormous odds to achieve a senior academic officer position. They stepped beyond internalized barriers, they broke free of the dominant culture successfully moving between the private and public domain. Hopefully, as society grows and the dominant paradigm shifts moving the reproductive processes from the private domain to the public domain, women will not have to make as many choices when developing a career.

Essentially, this dissertation is their story. My job, of merely teasing out what was important and identifying common themes and patterns, was much easier than the climb taken by these achievers to the top of the senior academic administrative ladder. These women are role models, serving as inspirations to the next generation of aspiring women professionals.

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Protocol

Each interview will be conducted in a location negotiated between the researcher and the respondent. The interviews will be tape recorded while the researcher takes limited notes on the participant's responses as well as field notes on the context, apparent attitude of the participant, overall impressions, and miscellaneous details. Every attempt will be made not to "lead" the participant in her answers to the open-ended questions being asked. The outcome of the inquiry is to come to some type of understanding or verstehen, an understanding through an emic perspective.

Because the boundaries of the study are determined mutually by and negotiated between the researcher and the respondents as the data is analyzed, an interview guide, containing open-ended questions, will be used. Two one hour interviews will be scheduled with a possible third follow-up interview.

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your career. Where did you start? Tell me about your career path.
2. How did you decide to pursue a career in higher education administration?
   - 2A. Who are what influenced you decision to enter academe? When did you make that decision?

3. How did you come about to be a senior academic officer? How did you secure your current position?

4. Tell me about any strategies you used to obtain your position as a senior academic officer.

   4a. (Possible follow-up) How has mobility (relocating institutions or geographical locations) been a factor in your career choices?

5. Tell me about who or what assisted you in making career choices or encouraged you to pursue the positions you have held. Any mentors or role models?

6. Tell me about your education and your degrees. What significance do they have to the career choices you have made?

7. How have traditional gender roles influenced your career and/or your career choices?

8. Describe yourself to me. What are your strengths, your weaknesses, what characterizes who you are?

9. Where do you go from here? Any future goals or aspirations?

10. What advice do you have for aspiring professionals?

APPENDIX B
PRELIMINARY STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE
The Career Development of Senior Women
Academic Officers in New England Community Colleges

Name: _____

Title: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

Educational History: Please list all college degrees.

Degree	Major or Discipline	Date	Institution
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

2. How long have you been in your current position? _____

3. Please indicate the manner (by selecting one option) in which you secured your current position.

_____ Nominated for the position.

_____ Promoted from within the institution or system.

_____ Direct application to an opening listed in the Chronicle, professional journal, or other type of job announcement.

_____ Other (please explain)

_____

4. Please indicate all positions and the length of time held before becoming a senior academic officer:

TIME	POSITION
_____	Adjunct Faculty Member
_____	Full-Time Faculty Member
	_____ Assistant _____ Associate _____ Full Professor
_____	Department Chair
_____	Division Dean
_____	Assistant or Associate Academic Dean
_____	Academic Dean (other than senior level position)
_____	Others (please explain) _____
	_____

5. Have you ever worked in a four-year college or university? Is yes, please indicate the institutions and the positions held.

YES NO

Institution	Position
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

6. How long have you been employed in higher education? _____

_____

Thank you so much for your help. Please return this form in the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Darlene Miller, 3 Brigham Circle, Randolph, Vermont 05060.

Your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence.

APPENDIX C
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

16 January 1996

(Field)1

Dear (Field)2

I am exploring the possibility of pursuing a doctoral dissertation on the career development of women to senior academic officer positions in community and technical colleges. It is my intention that this project will shed light on the avenues of mobility and the career paths used by women to successfully prepare for the position. I would appreciate your help and assistance.

In order to determine whether or not this project is feasible, I am in need of some preliminary data and information. Please take the time to read and complete the enclosed questionnaire. I anticipate that this process will take less than 10 minutes of your time.

If the data is sufficient for undertaking this project, please understand that your name will not be used in the study. Data from the preliminary study may be reported in an aggregate manner for the defense of the dissertation proposal. Your informed consent to participate in the preliminary study is assumed when you complete the questionnaire and submit it to the researcher.

Thank you for your time and help in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Darlene Miller
Doctoral Candidate
University of Massachusetts

APPENDIX D
HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

Researcher: Darlene Miller, University of Massachusetts
Name of Study: How Did They Get There? The Career Development of Senior Women Academic Officers in New England Community Colleges

The Purposes of the Project are:

1. Conduct research for the dissertation at the University of Massachusetts.

2. Study and describe the career paths and career development of female senior academic officers in community colleges.

3. Gain insight into the experiences of a woman college administrator to assist emerging professionals make career choices through reading of case histories of successful women.

I, _____, understand that:

1. The information obtained in this project will be used to write case histories for the researcher's dissertation. A draft of the case study and field notes will be read by yourself and the faculty members of the dissertation committee. The respondent has the right to review all material before defense and publication of the dissertation. An overview of the case study will be presented at the researcher's dissertation defense.

2. All interviews which will be tape recorded. Interview tapes and transcripts will be kept secure by the researcher.

3. Data from this research and subsequent research may be used in articles published in higher education journals.

4. Real names of the respondent and the location of the college of employment will be changed (through the use of pseudonyms) during data collection, the final paper and any subsequent articles or publications unless the respondent wishes to be acknowledged.

5. Subjects are free to participate or not to participate without prejudice. Subjects have the right to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation.

6. Because of the small number of participants, approximately six, there is some risk that a subject might be identified as a participant in this study.

6. Any problems, concerns, or questions of confidentiality will be raised with the researcher as soon as they arise. We will try to work out any difficulties.

_____ _____

NAME DATE

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